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Everett green, Mar. Anne,

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THE EMPRESS MATILDA.

London. Henry Colburn. 1849.

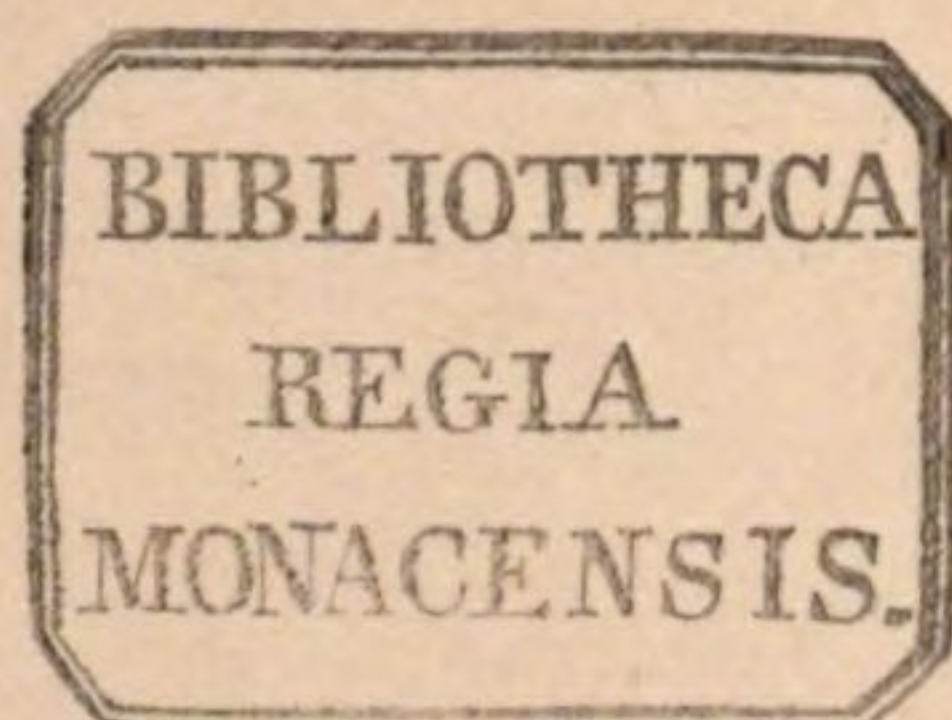
LIVES
OF THE
PRINCESSES OF ENGLAND,
BY
MARY ANNE EVERETT GREEN.



Marriage of Henry the Lion and the Princess Matilda.

VOL. I.

LONDON,
HENRY COLBURN, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET,
1849.



BIBLIOTHECA

REGIA

MONACENSIS.

LIVES

OF THE

PRINCESSES OF ENGLAND,

FROM

THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

BY

MARY ANNE EVERETT GREEN,

EDITOR OF THE

"LETTERS OF ROYAL AND ILLUSTRIOUS LADIES."

VOL. I.

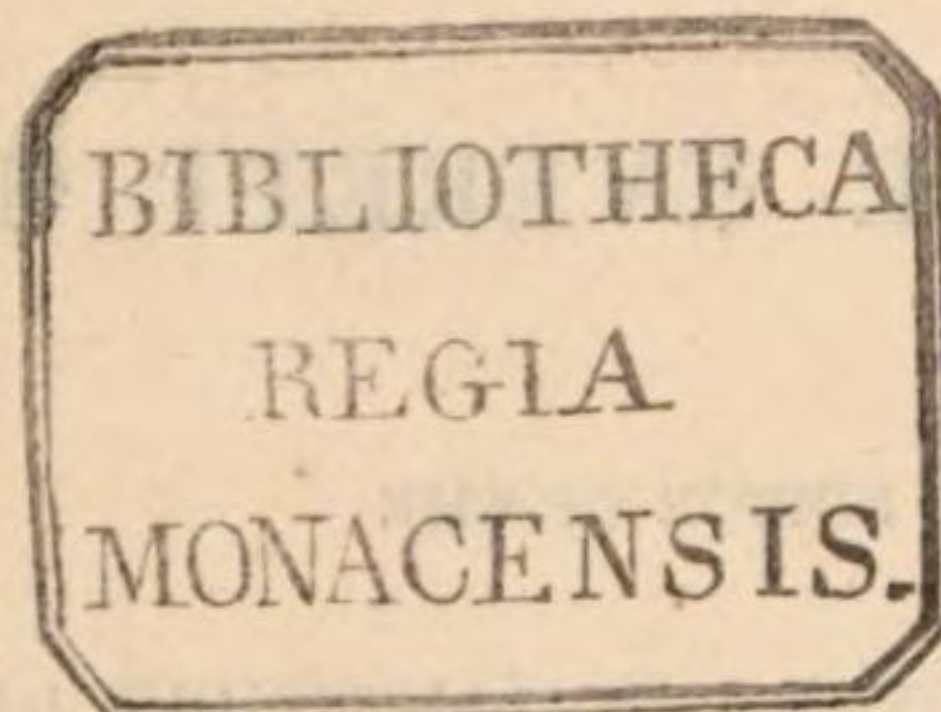
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TO

DAWSON TURNER, ESQ., F.A.S., F.R.S.,

OF GREAT YARMOUTH, NORFOLK,

THIS SLIGHT MEMORIAL

OF PERSONAL ESTEEM AND LITERARY OBLIGATION,

IS PRESENTED,

IN THE CONVICTION THAT IT WILL DERIVE ADDITIONAL VALUE

FROM ITS ASSOCIATION WITH A NAME

SO WELL KNOWN AND DESERVEDLY HONOURED

IN SCIENCE, LITERATURE AND ART.

In the Press, by the same Author,

LIVES

OF THE

QUEENS OF ENGLAND

OF THE

HOUSE OF BRUNSWICK.

TWO VOLS.

PREFACE.

In presenting to the public memorials of the English Princesses, the writer feels assured that the very title of the work will bespeak a welcome. The loyalty which is almost an instinct in a British heart imparts peculiar interest to all details concerning royal personages, and the domestic annals of female royalty are the more eagerly welcomed, at a time when the throne is occupied by one who fills with equal grace the position of queen, and wife, and mother.

The present field is, moreover, an untrodden one. Of the numerous ladies memorialized in these volumes, only one, Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, has hitherto been made the subject of a consecutive biography; whilst of the others, little more than their names and marriages are mentioned by the general historian. These royal daughters of England have entered upon the stage of existence, from which some of them have early passed away, and others have graced foreign courts, and played an important part abroad; yet they have remained as unknown to the generality of English readers, as though they had not formed scions of that princely tree round

which English hopes and affections are so closely entwined.

In the execution of her task, the author is conscious of many defects. A series of memoirs, involving researches not only into English records and chronicles, but into those of almost every civilized country in Europe, could scarcely fail, even in older and more experienced hands, to present many points of criticism to the historical antiquary. She can, however, conscientiously affirm that no pains have been spared to render the biographies authentic. Authorities have not been taken second-hand, when it was practicable to revert to the originals. Much care has been bestowed upon the verification of names, dates, genealogies, and other points of historic importance; and when the paucity of information has left much to conjecture, the line between fact and probability has been carefully drawn.

The compilation of the memoirs has been, with occasionally lengthened interruptions, the work of more than six years. The arrangements for their publication were concluded as early as the summer of 1843; but several circumstances then concurred to render the appearance of the work inexpedient; and, during the last four years, other literary as well as domestic engagements, and a protracted continental residence, have precluded until recently the attention requisite to the revision and printing of it. Even now an apology is required for many inaccuracies, which have escaped notice in a too hasty revision of some of the proof-sheets. The remaining volumes are in preparation, and will be published in due time.

The compiler has now gratefully to acknowledge her obligations to those who have kindly facilitated the prepa-

ration of her work; and, first, to the beloved sister whose cheerful companionship in labour has lightened many an hour of literary toil. To Sir Thomas Phillipps, Bart., of Middlehill, the author is indebted for liberal access afforded to his extensive MS. collections. To the late Archbishop of Canterbury, and to Dr. Maitland, formerly librarian at Lambeth, she owes the privilege of consulting the valuable MSS. in the archiepiscopal library. To the Earl of Devon and the Earl of Craven her best thanks are due, for polite communications in reference to those Princesses who were connected with their illustrious ancestors; and to Dawson Turner, Esq., of Yarmouth, for the freedom with which he has allowed her to avail herself of his singularly choice collection of royal and other autographs.

The courteous attention of Sir Francis Palgrave and the gentlemen connected with the record commission, during her researches in their several depositories, also claims her cordial thanks. These are more especially due to T. D. Hardy, Esq., of the Tower Record Office, whose ability to assist her has only been equalled by the unfailing kindness with which that ability has been exercised. To Sir Charles G. Young, Garter King-at-Arms; to W. Hardy, Esq., of the Duchy of Lancaster Office; and to Dr. Bandinell, and the Rev. Henry Coxe, of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, she is also indebted for access to the books and MSS. under their several keeping.

Nor are her obligations confined to her own countrymen. To M. Guizot the author tends her respectful thanks for the liberal politeness with which the "*Archives des affaires étrangères*" were opened to her, through his influence; and also to M. Mignet, for copies of several important documents from those archives. To M. Teulet, of the

“Archives du royaume, Hotel Soubise;” to M. Paulin Paris, of the Bibliothèque Nationale; and to M. Auguste Vallet de Viriville, of the École des Chartes; and also to the librarians of the Mazarin, Arsenal, and St. Genevieve Libraries, Paris, she is indebted for their kind assistance, in reference to the books, MSS., and records, in their charge; and especially to M. Barbier, librarian of Louis Philippe, at the Louvre, for the privilege of consulting many rare and valuable volumes in the collection of the ex-king.

To the public in general, and to her fair countrywomen in particular, the author now commends her work, in the confidence that she could not readily have introduced to their notice a series of memorials, the subjects of which present, in their domestic as well as in their public character, so much to admire and to respect, and so little to censure as the Princesses of England.

7, Upper Gower Street, Bedford Square,

Sept. 11th, 1849.

CONTENTS

OF

THE FIRST VOLUME.

	Page
CÆCILIA, eldest Daughter of William the Conqueror	1
Title of Princess—Anglo-Saxon Princesses—Ordericus Vitalis— Cæcilia's birth—Early gravity—Dedicated to the cloister— Fêtes on her taking the veil—Rules of Holy Trinity—Magni- ficent gifts of Cæcilia's parents—Her learning—Death of the Abbess Matilda—Circular letter—Cæcilia elected abbess— Privileges of Holy Trinity—Her charter—Visit of Duke Robert —Her able government—Death—Burial—Present state of the abbey.	
ADELIZA, Daughter of William the Conqueror	14
Differences of historians—Early education—Betrothed to Harold —Sickness—Death.	
MATILDA, Daughter of William the Conqueror	16
Name—Betrothed to Earl Edwin—His visit to Normandy— Matilda in England—Edwin presses marriage—Refused—His irritation—Matilda returns to Normandy—Attachment between her and Edwin—His murder—Matilda's sorrow—Retires to Holy Trinity—Demanded in marriage by Alphonso—Her reluctance—Splendid preparations—Her prayers against mar- riage—Early death—Burial.	
CONSTANCE, Daughter of William the Conqueror	23
Talents and education—Visit to St. Eurole—Mistake respecting Earl Alan—Circumstances relating to their marriage—Nuptials at Caen—Breton bards—Poverty of Alan—Conflicting opinions about Constance—Settles disputes—Court of Rennes—Charter of Constance—Her household—Early death—Splendid obse- quies—Tomb discovered—Alan's second marriage—His por- trait.	
ADELA, youngest Daughter of William the Conqueror	34
Her spirited character—Early lover—He assumes the cowl— Stephen of Blois demands her hand—Splendid nuptials— Her influence with the earl—Odes addressed to her—Abbot Baldric's cape—Her learning—Stephen taken prisoner—Adela visited by Anselm—Her gifts to churches, &c.—Removal of	

the bones of St. Helena—Stephen joins the crusade—Adela's regency—Her children—Visited by Anselm—Sickness and miraculous recovery—Aids the King of France—Letter of Hildebert—Stephen's letters—He deserts the crusade—She persuades him to return—His death—Adela settles quarrels between Henry I. and Anselm—Patronizes a love-match—Visit of Prince Boemond and of Pope Paschal—Quarrel with Bishop Ivo—Charter—Receives aid from France—Relinquishes government—Takes the veil at Marcigny—Her correspondence—A supernatural dream—Death of Henry I.—Destinies of Adela's children—Her death and burial.

GUNDRED, supposed Daughter of William the Conqueror . . . 72

Omitted by ancient chroniclers—Doubtful descent—Active career of Earl Warren—His mature age—Gundred's marriage—Their pilgrimage—Entertained at Clugni—They found Clugniac Priory—Charters of foundation—Gundred's tranquil life—Household—Children—Death—Tomb discovered—Earl Warren's death.

MATILDA, Daughter of Henry I.—CHAPTER I. 82

Matilda's ancestry—Her birth and education—Demanded in marriage by the Emperor Henry V.—Preparations for her journey—Ceremonies of her betrothal and coronation—German education—Marriage—Sketch of the life of Henry V.—His rebellion against his father—Quarrels with the Pope—Coronation at Rome—Slight mention of Matilda by the German chroniclers—Frequent absence of her husband—Her prudent conduct—Henry's excommunication—Absolution—Declining health—Reputed death and funeral—Rumours concerning him—Matilda returns to Normandy—Her hand solicited by German princes, but refused—Arrives in England—Receives homage of the nobles—Asked in marriage by Geoffry of Anjou—Matilda's aversion—Dignity of the House of Anjou—Matilda sent to Normandy—Knighting of Geoffry—Marriage ceremonies—Geoffry's character—Matrimonial quarrels—Matilda divorced—Returns to England—Renewed homage—Reconciliation with Geoffry—Birth of Prince Henry—General joy—The king comes to Normandy—Quarrels between him and Geoffry—Birth of the younger Geoffry—Illness of Matilda—Her liberal benefactions—Quarrels with her father—Return to Anjou—King Henry's death.

CHAPTER II. 125

Struggles in Normandy—Birth of Prince William—Matilda leads troops to aid Geoffry—Forced to retire—Robert, Earl of Gloucester—Continued contests in Normandy—Matilda lands in England—Reception at Arundel—Retires to Bristol—Residence at Gloucester—Fruitless negotiations—Battle of Lincoln—Stephen brought prisoner to Matilda—Imprisoned at Bristol—Matilda holds court at Cirencester—Gains Bishop of Winchester—Arrival in that city—Stephen's party excommunicated—General homage paid to her—Proclaimed Lady of England—Her progress to London—Reception—Haughty demeanour—Attempts of Londoners

—Flight to Oxford—Matilda's style—Seals—Offends Bishop of Winchester—Attacks him—Is besieged by Stephen's troops—Escapes in a coffin to Gloucester—Captivity of Earl Robert—Exchanged for Stephen—Geoffry's assistance demanded—Matilda besieged in Oxford—Landing of Prince Henry—Vain attempts to raise siege—Matilda's danger—Holds a council of war—Refuses to yield—Marvellous escape to Wallingford—Arrival of her son—Her cause declines—Return of Henry—Death of Earl Robert—Matilda retires to Normandy—Her improved character—Attachment to Henry—Yields him Normandy—Visit to Paris—Death of Geoffry—Ingenious letter-bag—Death of King Stephen—Matilda attends Henry's coronation—Regent in Normandy—Her son Geoffry—Abbey of Val-lace—Her Household—Illness—Liberal benefactions—Builds bridge at Rouen—Death of her son William—Appealed to in Becket's affair—Her judicious mediation—Correspondence with Becket, Henry, and Pope—Mediates truce between Louis and Henry—Death—Burial—Remains removed—Character.

MATILDA, Daughter of King Stephen 191

Birth—Betrothal—Death—Burial—Prayers for her soul.

MARY, Daughter of King Stephen 192

Birth—Education at St. Leonard's—Removal to Lillechurch—Becomes prioress—Gifts of her family—Death of her parents—Is made Abbess of Rumsey—Dress—Becomes Countess of Boulogne—Forcible abduction—Marriage to Matthew of Flanders—Character of Earl Matthew—Arrival at Boulogne—Violent opposition of the Pope and others—Interdict—Mary's Flemish costume—Becomes a mother—Fresh interdict—Family unity—Mary's regency in absence of her husband—Her retired life—Dislike to Henry II.—War between him and Matthew—Mary's letter to Louis of France—Renewed animosity of the Pope—Mary resumes the veil—Matthew's second marriage—Is slain—Mary's death—Marriage of her daughters.

MATILDA, eldest Daughter of Henry II. 215

Popularity of name—Birth—Early life—Royal nursery—Marriage embassy—Early struggles of Henry the Lion—His extensive dominions—Marriage agreed upon—Matilda sent to Saxony—Nuptials—Commemorative picture—City of Brunswick—Visit to Rouen—Dedication of churches—Visit to Bavaria—Henry's journey to the Holy Land—Matilda's character and occupations—Birth of her daughter—Splendid progress and return of Henry—Visit of the emperor and empress—Relics—Henry's frequent absences—Milanese expedition—Birth of young Henry—Quarrels with the emperor—Excommunication—Matilda obtains its repeal—Provides for Bishop Ulric—Her influence with Henry—Children—Attack on Brunswick—Matilda respectfully treated by emperor—Henry's submission—Exile—They go to Normandy—Honourably received—Bertrand de Born—Henry's pilgrimage—Departure for

	Page
England—Liberation of Matilda's mother—Birth of her son William—King intercedes for Henry—Return to Saxony—Diminished estates—Fresh exile—Death and burial of Matilda—Her statue—Portraits—Death of Duke Henry—Their children—Romantic marriage of young Henry—William ancestor of House of Brunswick.	
ELEANORA, second Daughter of Henry II.	263
Birth—Baptism—Alphonso solicits her hand—Splendid embassy—Journey to Spain—Delight of Alphonso—Betrothal, dowry, nuptials—Palace of Burgos—Visit to Henry II.—Alphonso tries to tax the Nobles—Their resistance—His enlightened policy—Conjugal attachment—Public improvements—Birth and death of Sancho—Birth of Berengaria and other daughters—Eleanora prevents Berengaria's marriage—Birth of Ferdinand and Leonor—Attack upon Moors—Battle of Alcarcos—Alphonso's reported mistress—Erection of the Huelgas—Marriage of Berengaria—Visit of Eleanora of England—Marriage of Blanche—Birth of Henry—Eleanora's visit to King John—Berengaria's return—Death of Ferdinand—Grief of King and Queen—Crusade against the Moors—Concourse at Toledo—Victory of Tolosa—Letters on the occasion—Public thanksgivings—Royal Family set off for Portugal—Sudden death of Alphonso—Grief of Eleanora—Appointed Regent—Her death—Character—That of Alphonso—Family portraits—Children.	
JOANNA, third Daughter of Henry II.—CHAPTER I.	308
Birth—Education at Fontevraud—Reverence for Becket—Demanded in marriage by William of Sicily—His early life—Tutors—Peter of Blois—Marriage embassy—Letter of William—Preparations—Journey—Arrival at Palermo—Splendid reception—Bridal and coronation—Dowry charter—Portrait of William—Palace of Palermo—Joanna's companions—Park of Monreale—Prosperous state of Sicily—Birth of a son—His early death—Abbey of Monreale—Becket's portrait—William's good government—Death of Joanna's brother, and of the Queen-mother—Costanza acknowledged heiress of Sicily—Her marriage—Attachment between her and Joanna—Preparations for crusade—William's battle-standard—Death of William—Burial—Conjugal tenderness—Coins—Prosperity of his reign.	
CHAPTER II.	336
Joanna's position—Tancred usurps the crown—Imprisons the queen—She sends messengers to King Richard—His indignation—Lands at Messina—Demands her from Tancred—She arrives at Messina—Visited by Philip of France—Her retaliations upon Tancred—Sells her dowry lands to Tancred—Winter at Messina—Arrival of Queen Eleanora and Berengaria—Capture of Emperor Isaac—Joanna sails for Syria—Received by King Philip—Resides in camp—Famine—Acres taken—Queens in royal palace—Joanna wooed by Saladin's brother—Refuses him—Resides at Acre a year—Returns to Europe—Visits Sicily and Rome—Escorted to Poictou by Raimond of	

Toulouse—His former wives—Contests for Toulouse—Marriage of Joanna and Raimond—She retains title of Queen—Her neglect of the Church—Birth of her son—Heads troops against her husband's rebels—Betrayed—Applies for aid to Richard—Easter at Mans—Second visit to Rouen—Grief for Richard's death—Poverty—Long illness—Attended by her mother—Death scene—Buried at Fontevraud—Effigies—Attachment of her maids—Prayers for her soul—Her will—Future life of Earl Raimond—His contests with the Pope—Attachment to Albigenes—His death—Raimond VII.

JOANNA, eldest Daughter of King John 377

Birth—Sought in marriage by her mother's lover—Sent for to Poictou—Given to de Lusignan—His marriage with Queen Isabella—Joanna betrothed to the King of Scotland—Detained in Provence—Disputes on the subject—She returns to England—Marriage at York—Goes into Scotland—Alexander's poverty—His sisters—His vigorous rule—Intercourse with England—Paucity of Scottish chroniclers—Joanna writes to Henry III.—Visited by her brother Richard—Christmas at York—Joanna's position—King Henry's gift to her—He writes to her—Galway Rebellion—Marriage of Princess of Scotland—Visits to England—Territorial disputes—York convention—Visit of Queen Eleanor—Joanna goes to England—Her illness—Death—Funeral ceremonies—Monastery of Tarente—Joanna's character—Alexander's character and death.

APPENDIX 405

ILLUSTRATIONS.

PORTRAIT OF THE EMPRESS MATILDA, from a Seal in
the Archives of Durham Cathedral *Frontispiece.*

MARRIAGE OF HENRY THE LION AND THE PRINCESS
MATILDA *Vignette.*

THE DAUGHTERS OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

CHAPTER I.

CÆCILIA—Title of Princess—Anglo-Saxon Princesses—Ordericus Vitalis—Cæcilia's birth—Early gravity—Dedicated to the cloister—Fêtes on her taking the veil—Rules of Holy Trinity—Magnificent gifts of Cæcilia's parents—Her learning—Death of the Abbess Matilda—Circular letter—Elected abbess—Privileges of Holy Trinity—Her charter—Visit of Duke Robert—Able government—Death—Burial—Present state of the abbey.

ADELIZA—Differences of historians—Early education—Betrothed to Harold—Sickness—Death.

MATILDA—Name—Betrothed to Earl Edwin—His visit to Normandy—Matilda in England—Edwin presses marriage—Refused—His irritation—Matilda returns to Normandy—Attachment between her and Edwin—His murder—Matilda's sorrow—Retires to Holy Trinity—Demanded by Alphonso—Her reluctance—Splendid preparations—Her prayers against marriage—Early death—Burial.

CONSTANCE—Talents and Education—Visit to St. Eurole—Mistake respecting Earl Alan—Circumstances relating to their marriage—Nuptials at Caen—Breton bards—Poverty of Alan—Conflicting opinions about Constance—Settles disputes—Court of Rennes—Charter of Constance—Her household—Early death—Splendid obsequies—Tomb discovered—Alan's second marriage—His portrait.

THE title of Princess of England, though now granted by courtesy, not only to the daughters of the sovereign, but also to the females of the collateral branches of royalty, is of comparatively modern application, and in

its pristine use was applied exclusively to the heiress of the English throne.

Mary, the daughter of Henry VIII., being the first royal daughter of England who was acknowledged as next in succession to the crown, was the first on whom this title was formally conferred, and the pertinacity with which she persevered in styling herself "Marie Princesse," when the will of her imperious father would have deprived her of her rights, in favour of the daughter of Queen Anne Boleyn, proves the importance that was attached to the title. Previously to that period, the royal maidens were merely styled "the lady, daughter of the king," or "the lady's grace," and by these simple, yet not ungraceful, appellations were designated by far the greater number of those illustrious ladies whose memoirs are to be laid before the reader. To avoid confusion, however, we shall give even to the daughters of our earlier sovereigns the title which the courtesy of the present day has awarded to them.

The details which have reached us of the daughters of our Anglo-Saxon sovereigns, are so very few and imperfect, that, although they possessed a far better claim to the title of "Princesses of England" than the Norman ladies who succeeded them, it would be an utterly hopeless task to attempt anything like a connected biography of them.

In commencing our series with the daughters of William the Conqueror, we labour under some slight disadvantage. Norman born and Norman bred, the habits and associations of these royal ladies were utterly distinct from those of the country which bestowed upon their father his proudest title, and none of them passed more than a very short time in England. As the daughters of a king of England, however, they have an undoubted right to take their place among our English Princesses.

It is much to be regretted that the accounts preserved by our ancient historians, of the daughters of William

the Conqueror are but slight and imperfect. Ordericus Vitalis, the prince of Norman chroniclers, after a slight mention of them, adds, "Of these daughters, skilful historiographers might weave together a large history, if they chose to hand down their various destinies to posterity. But we, who do not dwell on secular cares, but, taking up our abode in the monastic cloister, apply ourselves to monastic affairs, relating *briefly* those things which best become our station, shall return to our own province." Now, with all due respect to this worthy chronicler, to whom we, in common with all who write on this early period of history, are greatly indebted, we would venture to intimate, that had he devoted a little more space to these royal ladies, he would have done greater service to an inquisitive posterity than by the long eulogiums of antiquated abbots, or the quarrels of obscure monks, which he has detailed with a tedious prolixity, woefully miscalled *brevity*, scarcely conceivable by those who are not familiar with the works of the monkish historians.

The Princess Cæcilia, eldest daughter of William the Conqueror and Matilda of Flanders, was born probably about the year 1055. The Chronicle of Tours, almost the only one which mentions the date of her parents' marriage, places it in 1053¹, and although their three elder sons are generally supposed to have been born before any of the daughters, yet this supposition is only founded on the precedence ever given in ancient genealogical enumerations to the nobler sex, and by which

¹ Bouquet, Recueil des Historiens de la France, vol. xi., p. 348; see also Index Chronologicus, same volume, p. l. This date is likewise given by Père Anselme in his Hist. Geneal. de la France, vol. ii., p. 716. An ancient Flemish chronicle, recently published from the original MS., in the Burgundian library at Brussels, places the marriage as early as 1047. See Corpus Chronicorum Flandriæ, vol. i., p. 552, in the Collection de Chroniques Belges inédits, now in course of publication by the Belgic Government.

Henry, confessedly the youngest child, is also placed before his sisters. But several events in the lives of the elder Princesses, together with the periods of their marriage, would seem to fix an earlier date for their birth than that generally assigned, and render it more than probable that they were born before their brothers Richard and William.

From her infancy Cæcilia was remarkable for the gravity and sweetness of her demeanour¹, and her bent of mind coincided fortunately with her future mode of life, for she was dedicated to the cloister by the will of her father, when she was far too young to have manifested any decided bias for the life of religious seclusion she was destined to lead.

It is well known, that William the Conqueror and his queen, in order to reconcile the See of Rome to their union, which was forbidden on pretext of their being within the forbidden degrees of consanguinity², vowed each to erect and endow a stately monastery³. St. Stephen's Abbey, and that of the Holy Trinity at Caen, the one for monks and the other for nuns, both the most splendid monastic establishments of their time in Normandy, proved how well they fulfilled their promise, and, as a consummation of their offering, the zealous pair determined to devote their eldest daughter to the service of God, within the cloistered walls of the latter edifice. On the 18th of June, in the year 1066, the church of the Holy Trinity was solemnly consecrated by Maurilius, Archbishop of Rouen, in presence of the ducal family,

¹ Henderson's *Life of William the Conqueror*, p. 237.

² The true ground of this opposition seems to have been that the Pope was, at that time, in the interests of Germany, which was at war with Flanders, and therefore he did not wish to increase the influence of the Earl of Flanders by the union of his daughter with the Norman duke.—*Licquet, Histoire de Normandie*, vol. ii., p. 130, proofs.

³ *Chronique de Normandie*, p. 338, and *Gul. Gemeticensis*, p. 47, *Bouquet*, vol. xi. *Dumoustier's Neustria pia*, pp. 624—5.

and a large assemblage of the nobles of the land. On this occasion, after high mass had been performed, Duke William led his infant daughter Cæcilia to the foot of the altar, and taking her up in his arms, he solemnly vowed before that august assembly to dedicate his child to God, in that monastery¹, as an acknowledgement on the part of himself and Matilda, that to God alone they were indebted for their offspring, as well as everything else they possessed. She did not, however, immediately become an inhabitant of the cloister. Her early childhood was passed under the parental roof, and, as she sprang up to girlhood, her beauty and mental endowments rendered her the ornament of the court².

In the year 1074 she “exchanged her robes of splendour for those of humility,” and entered upon her noviciate. After a year’s trial, her resolution still remained firm, and the following summer she expressed her steadfast desire to take the monastic vows³. Magnificent preparations were made in honour of this event—the royal family was assembled at Feschamp, where was an ancient palace belonging to the Dukes of Normandy. Here they celebrated the Feast of Passover together, and a series of splendid entertainments was given to the assembled nobles. There seems something inconsistent in this display of worldly pomp before the eyes of the young novice; but if she mingled at all in the dazzling scenes, it was but as one set apart to a higher and holier destiny.

At the termination of the festivities, she was consigned, in the presence of the whole court, to the care of John,

¹ Gallia Christina, vol. xi., Inst. col. 61. Mabillon’s *Annales St. Bened.*, vol. iv., p. 674. Dugdale’s *Monasticon Anglicanum*, vol. vi., pt. 2, p. 1072. The foundation-charter is still extant, (see *Gall. Christ. ut supra*,) and bears the signatures of William and Matilda, with those of their sons Robert, Richard, and William. See also *Memoires pour l’Histoire de la Sainte Trinité de Caen*, Middlehill MS., No. 10,338, art. 12.

² Henderson, p. 237.

³ Du Moulin, *Histoire de Normandie*, p. 221.

Archbishop of Rouen, who bestowed upon her his solemn benediction, and threw over her young and graceful head that veil which she wore for more than half a century¹. The education she received in the convent of the Holy Trinity, under the tutelage of Matilda, the first abbess, was considered in those days a very learned one, and she is said to have amply profited by it². Her royal birth did not prevent her from submitting to the conventual regulations with becoming strictness and humility³.

The rules of the Benedictine Order, to which the Abbey of the Holy Trinity belonged, precluded any distinction of rank among the inmates of the cloister. Their food was to be partaken in common, and to be of the simplest kind—no luxury of attendance was permitted, and their clothing was to be of russet, either white or black. Silence was to be frequently observed, and conversation of any but a serious character, entirely avoided⁴—no easy task to the young and buoyant spirits, whom the prevailing superstition of the day condemned to such a penance, and who, we may presume, were not all gifted with the “early gravity” which marked the character of their royal associate.

The nuns were not, however, totally excluded from commerce with the world—they were allowed to receive their friends within their own apartments, and many of them had a niece, or other female relation, whose education they superintended. On certain days they were permitted to take exercise in a pleasant garden, at a short distance from the monastery, and on the feast days, when public

¹ Gulielmus Gemeticensis, p. 581, and Ord. Vit., p. 598, Bouquet, vol. xii.

² Ord. Vit. ut supra.

³ A beautifully written and illuminated copy of the “Leges et Consuetudines Sanctæ Trinitatis de Cadomo,” is in the Harleian MS., 3661; but the handwriting is too modern for it to be relied upon as authentic authority for a period so far remote.

⁴ Dugdale’s Monasticon, vol. i., Introd., p. XLvi.

processions were enjoined, they went in state to the different churches of the city¹.

The only peculiarity which is mentioned with reference to this convent, by which it seems to have been distinguished from others of the day, was the particular attention paid by its inmates to those musical performances, which, even at that period, formed such an attraction in a worship so imposing in its external ceremonies, as is that of the Romish Church. The Abbess Matilda was gifted with great musical powers, and every day, at their matin and vesper services, the sweet voices of the nuns, led by their saintly mother, were blended in a chorus of praise to God.

The gifts which the Princess brought with her to the monastery, already so richly endowed by her mother, were of the most costly description, and the Domesday Book bears ample witness to the subsequent liberality of her parents, who bestowed upon it many a broad acre of English land². "King William enriched it," says William of Poictou³, "more than king or emperor had ever enriched monastery;" and so strong was the affection of Queen Matilda for it, that in her last testament she bequeathed to it all her jewels⁴, and, at her special request, her corpse was brought to this her favourite convent, for interment. The ceremonies of the funeral were very splendid⁵, and though the young nun is not mentioned as taking any part in them, yet we cannot but suppose that, even under the shadow of the sable veil, the yearnings of filial affection would bring the tear into her eye, and disturb, at least for a while, the peaceful

¹ M. l'Abbé de la Rue, *Essais sur la Ville de Caen*, vol. ii., p. 20.

² Vol. i., pp. 79, 104, 166 b., and vol. ii., p. 21 b. Several deeds in its favour are extant during the few subsequent years, bearing the signatures of William and Matilda. *Gallia Christina*, vol. xi., Inst. col. 72—76.

³ Duchesne, *Rer. Norm. Script. Ant.*, p. 211.

⁴ *Essais Historiques*, M. l'Abbé de la Rue, vol. ii., p. 437.

⁵ *Ord. Vit.*, pp. 647—8, Duchesne, *Rer. Norm. Script. Ant.* Gul. Gemet., p. 47, Bouquet, vol. xi.

tranquillity of her spirit. Cæcilia seems to have devoted herself with much assiduity to the learning of the day, which principally consisted in poring over the lives and miracles of the innumerable saints and martyrs, whose deeds form the theme of many a marvellous tale. It is evident that she was well versed in the Latin tongue, for an ode is still extant, addressed to her in that language by Baldric of Anjou, Abbot of Bourgeuil¹, in which he congratulates her on her religious profession, and commends equally the royalty of her birth, the beauty of her person, the gracefulness of her manners, and her love of learning.

Matilda, Abbess of the Holy Trinity, who had filled her elevated situation for upwards of thirty-five years, felt herself, for some time before her death, unable longer adequately to discharge its duties, and became anxious to resign it into the hands of a successor. She wrote on this subject to the celebrated Archbishop Anselm. In his answer, which is still extant, he discourages the idea of a resignation, which could not be given in without the formal permission of the Archbishop of Rouen, the bishop of the diocese, and the nuns themselves, but exhorts her to choose some of the most pious and learned among her saintly daughters, and initiate them by "teaching, catechising, and exhorting," into those parts of her duties which she herself was unable to perform². Thus, the Princess Cæcilia, who was one of this select sisterhood, would become gradually accustomed to the duties she was afterwards to fulfil.

The aged abbess had secured a large share in the affections of the pious recluses; and her death, which took place on the 12th of June, 1112, excited the most

¹ Duchesne's *Rer. Franc. Script. Ant.*, vol. iv. p. 274. Mabillon's *Ann. St. Ben.*, vol. v., p. 92.

² Anselm's *Letters*, Gerberon's edit., book iii., No. 84. *Gall. Christ.*, vol. xi., col. 432.

sincere sorrow¹. On this occasion, a circular letter was addressed by the nuns to various churches in France and England to announce their loss. It is probable that the office of composing this document would devolve on the Princess Cæcilia, as abbess-elect, and the most learned of the community, and as it gives an interesting idea of the conventual habits of the times, an extract, containing a description of the death-bed scene of the Abbess Matilda, is subjoined. The original is written in Latin, which, if it cannot boast of classic elegance, is still distinguished by chasteness and purity of style.

“In her extreme old age, when the glory of nature had long since passed away, she was seized with a grievous sickness, and for four days agonized with continual pain. Feeling her dissolution approaching, she commanded her children, whom she had brought up in love and piety, to be called around her; and the truths which she had ever taught, she inculcated to the last. Having discoursed much on the subject of religion, after receiving the most desirable unction of the sacred oil and the life-giving communion of the body and blood of our Lord, amidst the embraces of the holy matrons and the sighs and sobs of the virgins, she passed gloriously away from this life to reign with Christ for ever. She died in the forty-fourth year of her preferment, on the 6th of July, in confession of the Christian faith, old and full of days. The loving care of her daughters buried her with all solemnity within the walls of her monastery, that in death she might still remain in the spot which in life she had never deserted. The most splendid funeral of our mother was performed after the example of that of the blessed Pope Martin—the voices of the funeral chanters were ever and anon stifled by their weeping, yet the tears of the weepers were blended with songs.

¹ Mabillon, *Ann. St. Ben.*, vol. v., p. 576.

“ Since, however, no one can escape the evil conversation of this world untainted by some slight stain, which may be purified by prayers and alms, we beseech you, by the emotions of fraternal love, and by the mercies of the Christian religion, that whatever wound our departed mother may have received in this world, where vices, like wild beasts, beset our path, you will heal and remedy by your holy prayers and liberality to the poor. Also our sisters and all those of both sexes whose names are annexed, we commend to your diligent love—Matilda, Queen of England, foundress of our monastery, Adelaide, Matilda, and Constance, her daughters,” &c. Here follow the names of thirty-one nuns, and four priests, of the convent—those belonging to the community who had died since its foundation.

The letter concludes by exhorting the faithful to assist the sisterhood likewise with pecuniary donations, in order that they may be enabled to keep up the former state of the monastery¹. This appears a strange request when we consider the richness of its endowments, but is easily accounted for by the fact that, after the death of the Conqueror, many even of those nobles who had signed the foundation-charter, by which they bound themselves to protect it, had plundered its lands and seized its revenues—Henry, the youngest son of King William, being one of the number².

The office of abbess being now vacant, the nuns, influenced no doubt by respect for the birth of Cæcilia, as the daughter of their foundress, as well as by her own virtues, unanimously elected her to succeed to the dignity. The election was conducted with great solemnity. After being prepared for their important deliberations by the duties of the confessional, the nuns were all

¹ Mabillon, *Ann. St. Bened.*, vol. v., Appendix, Lxxxiii.

² Cotman and Turner's *Architectural Antiquities of Normandy*, vol. i., p. 28.

assembled in the chapel, the mass of the Holy Spirit was performed, after which they received the sacrament, and then a long oration was delivered to them upon the duty of giving their votes, unbiassed by private partiality, to the person whom they thought most fit to occupy the situation. Nor was the office, thus solemnly conferred, one of trifling importance. The Abbey of the Holy Trinity possessed, from its royal founders and benefactors, some singular privileges, which accord but little with our ideas of the quiet seclusion of a conventual life. Duke Robert of Normandy, the eldest brother of Cæcilia, testified his warm affection for her, not only by presents of lands to her convent, but by other gifts involving much active management on the part of the Superior. He resigned to her the whole right of the fishery of the river Orne, which had been bequeathed to him by his father. He also authorized a fair or market to be held on Trinity Sunday at Caen, during the continuance of which, and for several days before and afterwards, all the tolls that were taken were to belong to the lady abbess¹, who sent her own officers to collect them, and, in token of her claim, after vespers on the preceding Friday, she affixed her armorial bearings to each gate of the city. During the time that the fair lasted, the military governor was obliged, whatever his rank might be, to wait upon the saintly mother, and receive from her in person the parole of the day. Irresistibly ludicrous as is the idea of a full-armed knight waiting to receive the word of military command from a veiled abbess, the fact is attested by the undeniable authority of M. de la Rue, who had himself witnessed the performance of this ceremony.

The nuns of the Holy Trinity were very careful in the

¹ Chartulary of Caen, MS. 5650, Bibliothèque Royale, Paris. M. de la Rue, *Essais sur la ville de Caen*, vol. ii., p. 6. *Rotuli scaccarii Normanniae*, edited for the Antiquarian Society, by T. Stapleton, Esq., vol. i., *Introductio*, p. xxxiii.

preservation of the records of their monastery. Every year the most important events were inscribed on rolls of parchment, entitled "*Les Chroniques de Sainte Trinité*," but most unfortunately they, along with the charters, perished during the French Revolution¹, otherwise we might have obtained more circumstantial details of the Princess Cæcilia.

Only one charter of hers is now known to be in existence. In it she styles herself "Cæcilia, daughter of the king, by God's grace Abbess of the Holy Trinity, at Caen," and grants to a certain miller, named Ergot, the management of a mill, which she had built with her own wood, and which she pledges herself to repair when needful. The terms of the agreement were, that Ergot should pay to the convent an additional measure of corn and another of barley, beside the two measures which had formerly been the only revenue derived from it, and also that he should grind all the corn for the use of the convent, receiving a thirteenth part of the meal when ground, by way of compensation for his trouble².

With her younger brothers, William and Henry, Cæcilia seems to have kept up but little intercourse, their time being principally spent in England, but the generous-hearted and unfortunate Duke Robert seems ever to have fondly cherished the companion of his early childhood.

After his celebrated pilgrimage to the Holy Land, when, covered with laurels, Robert returned to Normandy, his first visit was to his sister, and into her hands he

¹ The extraordinary care taken of these important documents by Madame de Pontecoulant, the last abbess, occasioned their destruction. She hid them in trunks in the roof of the church, but the lead being stripped off, they were left exposed to the rain, and when M. de la Rue, to whom she had committed the secret of their hiding-place, returned to Caen, he found them completely rotted and spoiled.—*Essais sur Caen* vol. ii., p. 28.

² See Appendix, No. I.

consigned the most glorious of all his trophies, the great Saracen banner, which he had won at the celebrated battle of Ascalon, and which he wished to be preserved in the church of the Holy Trinity¹.

Cæcilia sustained her elevated office for fourteen years, with the most exemplary fidelity, adhering strictly to the rules of the convent, and enforcing them upon its inmates. Many maidens of the noblest houses in Normandy were under her maternal care; for, after the example had been set by William the Conqueror, the Abbey of the Holy Trinity became the favourite resort for those who forsook the allurements of high rank for the seclusion of a monastic life. Among these was Isabella, a granddaughter of her youngest sister Adela, who afterwards succeeded her aunt in the office of abbess.

Cæcilia died at the advanced age of seventy years, on the 30th of July, 1126, the twenty-sixth year of the reign of her brother Henry I.², having lived to witness, from her still retreat, many melancholy changes in the royal dynasty to which she was so nearly allied. She was buried by her sorrowing daughters within the choir of the nuns, but, during subsequent alterations made in that part of the church, her tomb was walled up, without any opening being left, through which it can be discovered³.

The Abbey of the Holy Trinity was, after the lapse of centuries, allowed to fall into decay, and was then rebuilt as a hospital for the Sisters of Charity⁴. In the time of Napoleon it served as a station for the Legion of Honour, but it has recently been converted into a manufacturing establishment, and the peaceful cloisters where our first

¹ Abbé de la Rue, *Essais sur Caen*, vol. ii., p. 6.

² *Chronicon Stephani Cadoniensis*, p. 780, *Gul. Gemet.*, p. 581, Bouquet, vol. xii.

³ De la Rue, vol. ii., p. 43.

⁴ Gally Knight's *Archæological Excursion in Normandy*. Translated into French by M. de Caumont, p. 39.

Anglo-Norman Princess and her saintly sisterhood indulged their pious meditations, or chanted their matin and vesper hymns, are now doomed to the incessant clanking of machinery, and the intrusion of bustling traders. It is, however, more fortunate than most other buildings of equal antiquity, for the choir is still in use as a place of public worship¹.

ADELIZA, OR ADELAIDE.

THE names and histories of the two remaining unmarried daughters of William the Conqueror are involved in a maze of inextricable confusion, amidst which it is next to impossible to arrive at anything like certainty. It were a needless and profitless task to point out the discrepancies of even the contemporary chroniclers, many of whom pass them over with but a slight and dubious notice. In a work like the present, the only course to be adopted is, after careful research and comparison, to bring out the conclusion which seems nearest allied to probability, and best supported by historic evidence².

The name of this Princess was given her probably in honour of Adeliza, her aunt, sister of William the Conqueror, though it generally assumes the more English form of Adelaide. Her early history is involved in much obscurity, but the little information that we do possess concerning her is such as to lead us to wish that further details had been preserved. She was remarkable, even among the beautiful daughters of William and Matilda, for her extreme loveliness, and the graces of her mind seem to have been fully equal to those of her person. She was not entirely, nor would it appear mainly, nurtured under the parental roof. It was no unusual thing

¹ Depping's *Histoire de Normandie*, vol. i., p. 107. Cotman's *Antiquities*, vol. i., p. 31.

² See Appendix, No. II.

in those early periods for the children of persons of high rank to be committed for tuition to trusty subjects, and Roger de Beaumont, one of the most powerful nobles and afterwards the vice-regent of Normandy, was chosen as her tutor. She could have been but a mere child when her hand was plighted by her sire, in order to promote his own ambitious schemes, to the Saxon Earl, Harold, in whom, with that keen-eyed discernment into the motives and springs of character for which the Conqueror was famed, he already beheld a rival to his own aspiring hopes. The circumstances of Harold's visit to Normandy, and of the compulsory oath exacted from him, rendered more impressive by the discovery of the sacred relics on which he had ignorantly laid his hand, when he believed himself to have sworn *only* on the holy gospels, are too well known to need repetition. An oath taken under such circumstances was not likely to be very rigorously observed, even had not the death of Adelaide prevented the breach of faith to her, as well as to her father¹.

In the short but expressive account given of her by Ordericus Vitalis, she is represented as being of a very religious turn of mind, and when the blight of premature decay fell upon her, with touching resignation she calmly commended her spirit to God, and died a tranquil and holy death². No account is preserved as to where the remains of the royal virgin were deposited; a somewhat singular omission in reference to one of such illustrious descent³. It has been supposed that the female figure on the Bayeux tapestry called *Ælfgiva*, who is standing at the gate of the ducal palace in conversation with a clerk, when Harold is sallying forth with Duke William, repre-

¹ John Pike's Chron. Harl. MS., 685, ff. 116 b. 117.

² Ord. Vit., p. 605, Gul. Gemet., p. 582, Bouquet, vol. xii.

³ Strictly speaking, Adelaide cannot be classed among the Princesses of England, inasmuch as her death took place before the Conquest, but for the sake of uniformity she is placed among the other daughters of William the Conqueror.

sents this Princess¹, but this conjecture is rendered improbable by the fact, that the figure in question is that of a woman, whereas Adelaide was a mere child at the time.

MATILDA.

THE name we have bestowed upon this Princess, though not the one by which she is distinguished by our ancient chroniclers, is given on the irrefragable authority of the Domesday Book, which meets with a singular confirmation in the occurrence of this name, with those of Constance and Adelaide, her sisters, in the solicitation of prayers for the souls of the departed, in the letter of the nuns of the Holy Trinity, which has been quoted previously².

After the conquest of England, King William, in order to secure the fidelity of Edwin, Earl of Chester, one of the most powerful of the Saxon nobles, promised him one of his daughters in marriage³, and the lady Matilda, who, after the religious profession of Cæcilia, and the death of Adelaide, was the eldest princess at court, was to become the bride of the handsome young Saxon.

He and his brother Morcar, though not present at the battle of Hastings, had yet stoutly resisted the invasion of the Norman strangers, and, when the South of England had fallen, they fled to join their still struggling countrymen at York; but when William had destroyed that city with fire and sword, and almost all had submitted, they too followed the general example, were received into favour, and attended at the coronation of the Conqueror⁴.

In March, 1067, the king, after a year's absence from his family, embraced the opportunity afforded by the

¹ Archæologia, vol. xvii., p. 101, note (p.)

² Page 10. See also Appendix, No. II.

³ Ord. Vit., Rer. Norm. Script., p. 511.

⁴ Simeon Dunelmensis, Twysden, p. 195.

apparent subjection of the English, to revisit in triumph his ancestral domains; and in order to secure the tranquillity of his new conquests during his absence, and, perhaps, also to demonstrate the reality of his success, he took over in his train Stigand, Archbishop of Canterbury, Edgar Atheling¹, the only male heir of the Great Alfred, and the principal English nobles, foremost among whom was Earl Edwin, the betrothed spouse of his daughter². William of Poictou, domestic chaplain of the Conqueror, gives a most brilliant and eloquent description of this triumphal voyage.

After enumerating the beautiful vessels adorned with precious metals, and wafted along by means of sails of imperial purple, he exclaims, "Behold how gloriously he returned! not like the Roman conquerors dragging a captive crowd behind him, but bringing as his willing subjects the Primate of England, the great abbots of the transmarine monasteries, and the sons of the English, rather worthy to be called kings, from the dignity of their race and the magnificence of their equipments³." The duchess-queen with her young family were all assembled at Feschamp to wait the landing of the Conqueror, and here the little Norman Princess first saw the Saxon youth, whose image was never afterwards to be erased from her heart. A series of triumphal progresses through some of the chief towns of Normandy ensued, in which the king was accompanied by his queen and children and

¹ The history of this youth, called England's darling, so inexpressibly dear to the great bulk of the nation, would afford an apt illustration of the proverb, that "truth is oftentimes stranger than fiction." Bandied about from one court to another, the victim, rather than the leader, of the many fruitless conspiracies that were formed in his favour, he, by his amiable and unambitious temper, became a favourite even with those who had most reason to fear his influence; and, what is very unusual in the dispossessed heir to a crown, died a natural death in England, having attained to a good old age.

² Benoit, Harl. MS., 1717, fol. 226, column 1. Sim. Dunelm., p. 197.

³ Gesta Gulielmi Ducis Normanniæ, Rer. Norm. Script., p. 210.

his Saxon guests. The sun itself smiled upon the festive throngs who crowded from the remoter regions to every point whence they could obtain a glimpse of their beloved chief; "for," says our chronicler, "it shone out with summer brightness, much more than is usual at this time of the year, and when the grand entry was made into Rouen, the city itself seemed to give forth one shout, as Rome formerly did, when she welcomed her Pompey¹."

Nearly a month was spent in this manner, after which the royal party returned together to Feschamp, where they celebrated the festival of Easter, and where many foreign as well as Norman nobles assembled to offer their congratulations to the new-made king. Among this brilliant band, the "long-haired foster children of the stormy north" excited universal admiration by the beauty of their persons, the dignity of their demeanour, and still more the splendour of their robes, encrusted with gold and silver, in comparison of which the most costly specimens of Norman art seemed valueless².

The summer was spent in making progresses to different churches, which were dedicated with great solemnity, and in the autumn King William, with his gallant train, took his departure for England³, and the royal family were once more left to comparative seclusion and repose.

In about a year after this period, the Conqueror, anxious to enjoy the society of his family, and to complete his new honours by the coronation of the queen, sent over for her to join him in England. The old romancer, Benoit⁴, gives a quaint enumeration of the

¹ *Gesta Gulielmi Ducis Normanniæ*, *Rer. Norm. Script.*, p. 211.

² *Ibid.* Benoit, f. 226 b., col. 1, Harl. MS., 1717.

³ *Ord. Vit.*, *Rer. Norm. Script.*, p. 509.

⁴ In the *Chroniques et Généalogie des Ducs de Normandie*, Harl. MS., 1717, f. 229, col. 1. This troubadour bard, the contemporary and rival of the celebrated Maistre Wace, was in no respect his inferior. He wrote his history at the express command of Henry II., and it contains some curious information about the Conqueror and his family

“knights of high parentage, the bishops, abbots, wise clerks, and high-born damsels,” who were sent by her lord to escort his duchess-queen to her new domains. It is probable that the whole of her family accompanied their royal mother, and thus, once more in the midst of scenes of festivity, the Princess Matilda was thrown into the society of her lover, and, although she was still very young, a strong and permanent attachment was cemented between them.

The promise to the young Edwin of so noble an alliance was certainly a very politic step, for his high birth and noble bearing had rendered him the idol of the English¹, and it would have strongly tended to discountenance the haughty exclusiveness of the Norman intruders, who were quite disposed to treat the native Britons with supercilious contempt, whilst they enjoyed their usurped possessions, and thus rendered tenfold more bitter the galling yoke of servitude.

Early in the year 1069, Earl Edwin began to urge his sovereign to fulfil the engagement and put him in possession of his young and lovely bride; but his demands met with only a cool reception. Although William himself was attached to the young earl, and always kept him near his person², the Norman nobles, who were jealous of the influence the young Saxon would thus acquire, used all their powers of persuasion to prevent the king's compliance, and the fiery earl, in a tumult of disappointed passion, left the court, and associating his brother Morcar with him, entered into a rash conspiracy against William. Their attempts were too hasty and ill-concerted to be

The rarity of the MS. is probably the reason why it has remained so long unprinted; the only perfect copy now known to exist is that in the Harleian MS., No. 1717, which is beautifully written, and in excellent preservation, from which its publication was commenced in 1836, by order of the French Government, under the care of M. F. Michel.

¹ Depping, Normandie, vol. i., p. 32. Ord. Vit., ut sup., p. 511.

² Benoit, f. 229, col. 2.

attended with any chance of success, and, on the approach of the king at the head of his troops, they laid down their arms, and were again received into apparent favour¹.

At the Feast of Passover which was celebrated as usual at Winchester, King William held a very splendid court, at which the young Edwin was no doubt present; gifts of costly jewellery were distributed among the nobles, and embroidered vests were sent to the monasteries by the monarch, "who was not as yet so much engaged in cares, as to forget the honour due to God his father creator²."

Shortly after this, symptoms of approaching disturbances manifesting themselves, the queen and her daughters were sent back to Normandy³; and sorrowful must have been the parting between Matilda and her lover, for the prospect of the consummation of their mutual vows was becoming daily fainter and fainter. The bond of friendly confidence between King William and the earl was broken—and although Edwin and his brother did not openly join in the next grand insurrection, yet, aware that they should be suspected, they fled, Morcar towards Ely, and Edwin towards Scotland⁴; but on his way, while passing through the defiles of a wood, he was treacherously murdered by three of his associates, after a gallant resistance. Ordericus Vitalis intimates, that at this time Edwin was engaged in treasonable correspondences with the Scots and Welch; it is evident that his base murderers believed their deed would prove accept-

¹ Saxon Annals, Gibson's edit., p. 174. Ord. Vit., ut sup.

² N'aveit aillors tanz granz affaires,
Ne tanz enmis, ne tanz contraires,
Qu'a Deu, son pere creator
Ne feist de son cors honor."

Benoit, f. 230, col. 2.

³ Henderson, p. 182.

⁴ Bromton, p. 203, and Dunelm., p. 969, Twysden.

able to the king, for they took the head of the young Saxon, streaming with blood, and presented it to him. Unwonted tears are said to have suffused his eyes at the sight, and cruel as William's conduct often undoubtedly was, yet he was above treachery, and should not lightly be suspected of a secret participation in so disgraceful a deed, especially as he showed his abhorrence of it by banishing the murderers¹.

No tidings have reached us of the feelings of Matilda, when she heard the tragic fate of her lover. History, fraught with the destinies of nations, has not a word to bestow on young hopes blighted, or early affections crushed. It is probable that she spent much of her time with her sister Cæcilia in the convent of the Holy Trinity, though she never took the veil,—for Baldric of Anjou, in an ode to that Princess, alludes to one of her sisters, whose name he has forgotten, who is staying with her, and circumstances seem to point out the young Matilda as that sister².

The next mention made of her, is in connection with a fresh alliance formed for her by the ambition of her father, with Alphonso the Valiant, the Sixth of Leon and First of Castile and Gallicia³. It affords a strong testimony to the wide-spread fame of the Conqueror of England, that a monarch from so remote a kingdom of Europe, at a period when the intercourse maintained between distant states was very slight, should have solicited his alliance. Yet supposing the heart of the young Princess had been as yet unscathed, such a destiny, which would banish her so far away from all she knew and loved, and commit her to the keeping of one whom she had

¹ Ord. Vit., *Rer. Norm. Script.*, p. 521. Depping, *Norm.*, vol. i., p. 44. Henry of Huntingdon, Savile, *Scriptores post Bedam*, p. 369.

² *Rer. Franc. Script. Ant.*, Duchesne, vol. iv., p. 274.

³ Ord. Vit., Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 605. Mariana, *Tabla de los Emp.*, prefixed to vol. i. of the *Historia de Espana*. *L'Art de Verifier*, vol. vi. pp. 541, 542.

never seen, and who had recently discarded his first wife, could not have been regarded without shrinking. Haunted as she was with the memory of the past, she manifested the strongest reluctance to the connection thus marked out for her. But the embassy sent to demand her, was numerous and splendid; the alliance was highly honourable, and the Conqueror was not of a temper to be lightly moved by the tears of a reluctant girl.

The preparations he made for his daughter's marriage were on a magnificent scale. From an entry in the Domesday Book it would seem that he provided her with a household of her own, for an allusion is made to "Godfrey, the *chamberlain* of Matilda, the king's daughter¹."

For several long years, Matilda had endeavoured by prayer and other acts of devotion, to gain repose to her wounded spirit, and so assiduous was she in these exercises, that after her death, a hard substance was found to have been formed upon her knees, the result of her long and frequent prayers². Her dread of her unknown Spanish spouse was so excessive, "that she supplicated the Omnipotent with floods of tears," that he would rather take her to himself than permit her to fulfil the detested union. Her earnest desires paved the way for their own accomplishment. She set out on her journey towards Spain with a brilliant *cortège*, but had scarcely reached the frontiers, when she sickened and died. Sorrow had done its work, and the chords of the young and gentle spirit, too tightly strained, had snapped—her death is universally attributed to a broken heart. We are not told what effect the news of his child's decease had upon her royal sire, but very little ceremony appears to have been observed at her funeral.

¹ Vol. i., page 49.

² Anonymous continuation of Bede, *Rer. Brit. Script.*, p. 340. *Malmsbury*, p. 111.

Her remains were brought back by her attendants to her native soil, and interred in the cathedral church of St. Mary's at Bayeux, but no monument to the memory of the young and broken-hearted Princess has ever been discovered¹.

The date of her death is not given, but it must have been previous to the year 1080, since in that year Alphonso consoled himself for the disappointment occasioned by the loss of his Norman bride by marrying a daughter of the Duke of Burgundy².

CONSTANCE.

THE Lady Constance has been represented by our ancient historians as the most talented among the highly gifted daughters of the Conqueror. The date of her birth, like that of all the other children of William and Matilda, must be matter of conjecture; it was most likely about the year 1057.

Her early education she received in Normandy, under the immediate superintendence of her mother, who seems to have entertained an esteem for female learning, very uncommon at that period³, and to have provided every possible facility for the studies of her daughters. We have the concurrent testimony of several contemporary historians to the unusual extent of the accomplishments of these royal damsels⁴.

Excepting during the short period which Queen Matilda and her daughters passed in England, prior and subsequent to her coronation, it is doubtful whether Constance ever visited this country. She seems to have been the

¹ Ord. Vit., ut supra. Sandford's Genealogical History, p. 12.

² L'Art de vérifier les Dates, 8vo. edit., vol. vi., p. 541.

³ Malmsbury, p. 97. Ord. Vit., Rer. Norm. Script., p. 513. Benoit f. 210, col. 1.

⁴ Benoit, f. 248 b. col. 2. Wace's Roman de Rou, vol. i., p. 59.

favourite daughter and constant companion of the Queen, and, either from the reluctance of her mother to part with her, or for some other unknown reason, she was passed over in the matrimonial schemes of her match-making father, and remained at home considerably longer than any of her sisters, and for nearly six years was the only princess at court. In the year 1081, we find her accompanying her mother and several Norman ladies on a visit to the monastery of St. Eurole, on which occasion many splendid gifts were presented at the shrine of the saint, and the Queen promised others still more costly; but her death, which took place very soon after this, prevented the execution of her munificent designs¹. The decease of her mother left the Lady Constance without a female companion at her father's court. Whether she spent the few years that intervened until her marriage in England or Normandy, or whether she adopted the then ordinary expedient of seeking for a while the shelter of a convent, we have no means of ascertaining.

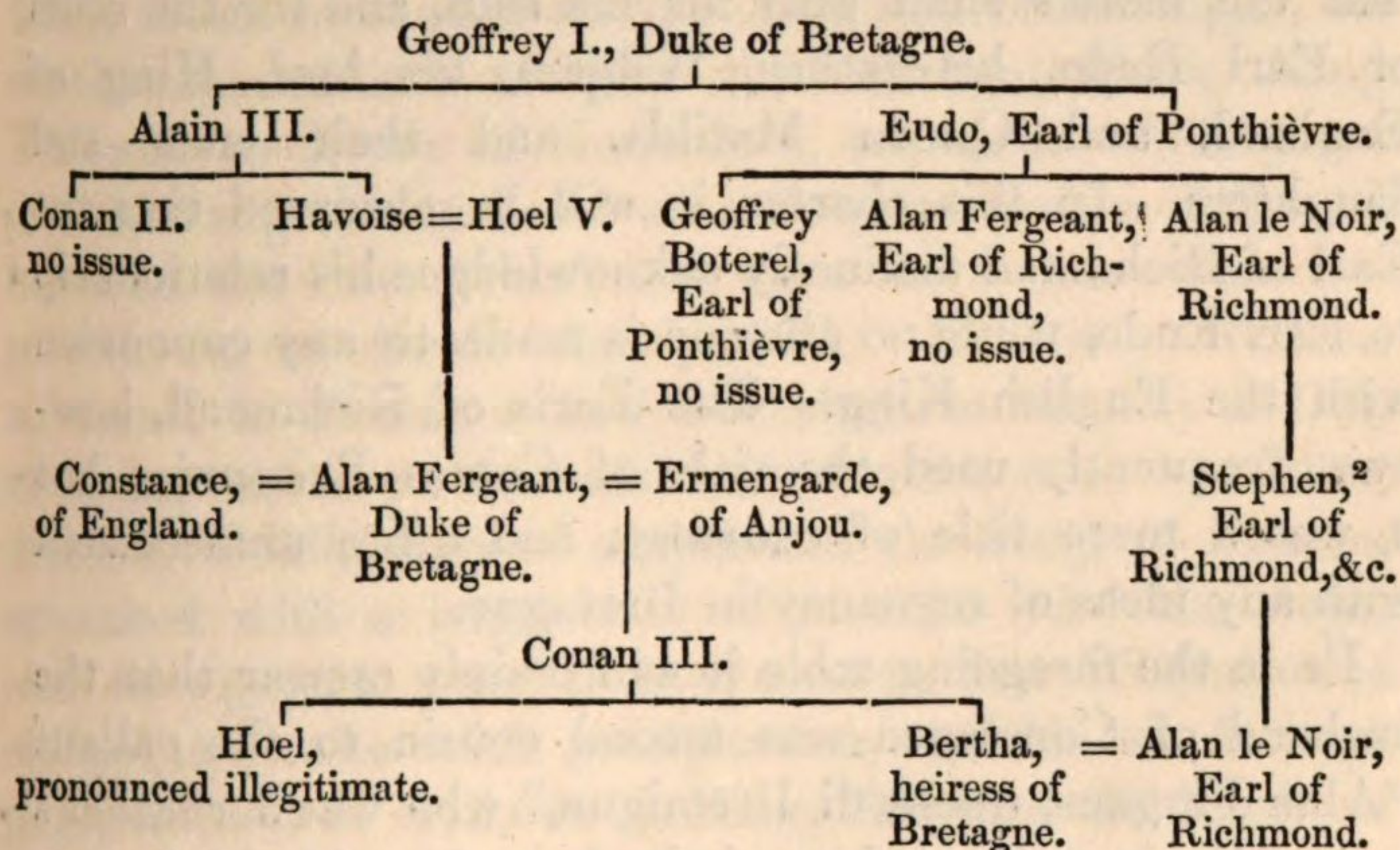
A singular mistake prevails among most of our modern genealogists² with reference to the husband of this Princess. From the similarity of name between Alan, Earl of Richmond, son of Eudo, Earl of Ponthièvre, who was of the ducal house of Bretagne, and Alan, son of Hoel V., afterwards Duke of Bretagne—increased by their both assuming the cognomen of Fergeant, or the Red—the two

¹ Ord. Vit., Duchesne, Rer. Norm. Script. Ant., p. 603. Miss Strickland, who, on the authority of Ordericus Vitalis, Sandford, and others, supposes Constance to have been married in 1075, takes it for granted that the object of this visit was to intercede with the saint in behalf of Constance, who was anxious to bring heirs to Bretagne, adding that it failed, and that the duchess died soon after, to the great grief of her mother. We shall, however, find that her marriage did not really take place till 1086; and she certainly did not die before her mother, for all the Norman and Breton chroniclers agree in placing her death in 1090, and deeds of hers are extant dated long after Queen Matilda's death.

² Among these may be named Dugdale, Brooke, Vincent, and Sandford, who have all fallen into the same error. It is rectified by Gale in the genealogical table prefixed to the *Registrum Honoris de Richmond*.

have been completely identified, and the hero who contributed so largely to the victory of Hastings, and was rewarded with a plentiful share of the English lands, has been confounded with the future son-in-law of King William.

The following slight genealogical sketch, drawn from the tables of Lobineau and Maurice, prefixed to their splendid works on the history of Bretagne, and compared with the genealogy given in the *Art of verifying Dates*¹, will, it is hoped, give a clear view of the case.



It is singular that the many difficulties implicated in the blending of these two characters should not have earlier induced a doubt that they could not be the same. For instance, Alan is said to have been buried at St. Edmondsbury, in Suffolk³, and, again, on equally good authority at Rhedon, in Bretagne⁴. He is sometimes

¹ Vol. xiii., 8vo. edit., pp. 202 and 249, et seq.

² In placing Stephen as the son rather than the brother of Alan le Noir, we are guided by the lucid account of the Earls of Richmond, given in the third Report of the Lords' Committees on the dignity of the Peerage, p. 124, which is founded on strong documentary evidence, and sanctioned by its adoption by Sir Harris Nicolas, in his *Synopsis of the Peerage*, p. 534.

³ *Monast. Ang.*, vol. iii., p. 140, b. donationes.

⁴ Maurice, vol. i., p. 90.

said to have left his dominions in Bretagne to his son Conan¹, while again, those in England, from his dying without issue, are said to have devolved upon his brother, Alan le Noir². The lands of the unfortunate Earl Edwin, said to be given to Alan as the dowry of Constance, were granted at the siege of York in 1069, whereas her marriage did not take place till 1086. Again, a charter of Alan, Earl of Richmond, is extant³, granting lands to the priory of Swavesey, in Cambridgeshire, on the express condition that the monks shall pray for his soul, and for the souls of Earl Eudo, his father, William, his lord, King of England, and Queen Matilda, and their sons and daughters. In this charter it will be observed that the Earl of Richmond distinctly acknowledges his relationship to Earl Eudo, while no allusion is made to any connexion with the English King. The Earls of Richmond, however, frequently used the title of Comes Britanniae, but it was a mere title of courtesy, and quite unassociated with any ideas of regnancy in Bretagne.

From the foregoing table it will plainly appear that the husband of Constance was second cousin to the gallant "Alan Fergans, quens di Bretaigne," who was her father's companion in arms, and was indeed considerably his junior, being but a child at the time of the battle of Hastings. It was not until the marriage of Alan, son of Stephen, Earl of Richmond, with the grand-daughter and heiress of Alan Fergeant, Duke of Bretagne, that the earldom and dukedom came under the dominion of the same individual. This genealogical digression must be pardoned on the ground that the general misunderstanding on the subject seemed to necessitate an accumulation of proofs.

As the young Alan grew up, he proved himself to be a

¹ Maurice, vol. i., p. 90.

² Dugdale's Baronage, vol. i., p. 49.

³ Monast. Ang., vol. vi., pt. 2, p. 1001.

rival in bravery even of his far-famed namesake, and the particulars connected with his marriage, show that he was a worthy son-in-law even for the mighty sovereign, the fame of whose prowess had resounded throughout Europe.

In his youth, Alan, then styled Earl of Nantes, had inflicted upon the doughty conqueror of England one of the few reverses his arms were ever destined to experience¹, and when, on the death of his father Hoel in 1084, Alan succeeded to the dukedom of Bretagne, he absolutely refused to pay the homage which King William, as Duke of Normandy, required. This point of feudal superiority had been a frequent source of discord between the two dukes², and once more arms were appealed to, to decide the quarrel. In 1085, William advanced to Bretagne and laid siege to the city of Dol, swearing never to rise until he had reduced it; but Alan, aided by Foulk, Earl of Anjou and the King of France, advanced with a large body of men to raise the siege, and so vigorous were their measures, that William was obliged to retire with precipitation, and his whole baggage, valued at £15,000 sterling, fell into the hands of the victors³.

The English king had generally too much upon his hands in his island dominions, to be able to combat hostilities elsewhere; so submitting to the disgrace as well as he could, he made overtures of peace, one condition of which was to be the marriage of the Lady Constance to the gallant Duke of Bretagne. These

¹ Ord. Vit., Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 594. Maurice, vol. i., p. 79.

² It should be observed that the title of Duke is only given to the Earl of Bretagne by courtesy. It was not formally conferred upon the Earls of Bretagne till the year 1297, when Philip IV. of France granted it by patent to John II., but it was frequently used by the ancient earls. Anselme, *Alliances geneal.*, p. 448. Lobineau, *Preuves*, p. 442.

³ Ord. Vit., Bouquet, vol. xii., pp. 595—6. Père Daniel, vol. ii., p. 391.

proposals were accepted, and Alan, much elated with the prospect of so splendid a union, accompanied the king to Bayeux, where the agreements were finally entered into, and thence to Caen, in Upper Normandy, where the royal family were then residing¹.

The nuptials were solemnized with great pomp, in the year 1086, and afterwards the young couple proceeded to Bretagne, where Constance was received with all the respect due to her birth and rank, and for six days the marriage-feasts were celebrated at Rennes with general rejoicing². The Countess was, at this time, remarkably pleasing in her appearance, and graceful in her manners, while the accomplishments of her mind were not at all inferior to those of her person³. The province where Constance was to find her new home, however unassociated it may now be with all that is interesting and romantic, was then the land of poetry and song, the original seat of those troubadour romances which spread from thence over Europe, and whose fascination is acknowledged even to the present day. Few of these antique productions are now extant, and such as do remain are comparatively buried in the library of Upsal, yet the constant reference to the Breton bards by the earliest Norman romancers with whose works we are acquainted, proves their superior antiquity⁴.

Notwithstanding the splendour with which she was received, no very stately home can have awaited the Lady Constance, for the exchequer of Bretagne was so reduced by the expenses of the war, that we find the young earl was obliged to dispose of some lands to the Abbey of Quimperle, on condition of their supplying

¹ Ord. Vit., ut sup. Du Moulin, p. 220.

² D'Argentré, p. 228. Chron. Brit., Maurice, Preuves, vol. i., col. 102. Chron. Ruy. Cœn., ibid, col. 250. Chron. Kemperl., Baluzius, vol. i., p. 250.

³ Dom. Lobineau, vol. i., p. 104. Dom. Maurice, vol. i. p. 81.

⁴ M. l'Abbé de la Rue's Recherches sur les Bardes de Bretagne.

him with a horse and 1000 marks, to meet his present necessities¹. In the December after her marriage we find Constance with her husband visiting one of the Breton nobles at the castle of Ansketil, where they conjointly witnessed a charter of gift to the monks of St. Florence².

The most contradictory accounts exist as to the conduct of the Duchess Constance in her new and elevated position. Ordericus Vitalis tells us that she was humane to the poor, a general peace-maker, and so greatly beloved by the Bretons that it was a subject of the greatest regret to them that she had no children to perpetuate her virtues; while Malmsbury³ and the anonymous continuator of Bede⁴ say that the rigidity with which she persuaded her husband to enforce the rules of justice so exasperated his subjects in that lawless age, that they administered a poisonous draught, which occasioned her death. Duke Alan was certainly very vigorous in the execution of the laws, and established an entirely new system of judicature in his dominions⁵, but whether he was influenced in this by his duchess would be impossible now to ascertain. Such state documents as are preserved, relating to Constance, are very far from substantiating the accusation of harshness.

On one occasion, the anger of Duke Alan was vehemently roused against Peter Fitz-gerald, a Breton noble, who, on entering the monastery of St. Medard's at Dol, transferred to it some lands, which he held from the duke, without asking his consent; but the duchess interfered in his behalf, and not only succeeded in appeasing the wrath of her spouse, but in inducing him to confirm the dona-

¹ Actes de Bretagne, vol. i., col. 465.

² Maurice, Preuves, i., 463.

³ Page 111, Scriptores post Bedam.

⁴ Rer. Brit. Script., p. 340.

⁵ Maurice, vol. i., p. 87. D'Argentré, p. 231. Les grandes Chroniques de Bretagne, p. 76.

tion¹. At another time, during the celebration of the Christmas festivals, a quarrel arose between the chaplains of Duke Alan and some monks, who were sharing his hospitality. The ground of the dispute is not stated, but it became so serious that commissioners were appointed by Alan to examine into the affair. Both parties drew up written memorials of their grievances, and all these the young duchess took the pains to read and examine,—no light task certainly, for in their verbose and tedious prolixity, the monks of that day were worthy rivals of their proverbially long-winded successors, the lawyers of the present; but by this exercise of her skill and patience she contributed materially to bring the matter to an amicable conclusion².

On state occasions, the court over which the duke and duchess presided, must have presented a brilliant appearance, for we are incidentally informed, that at a Christmas feast, besides the members of the ducal family, fourteen barons, three bishops, and three abbots were present—a very large number considering the comparatively small extent of the ducal dominions³. Great harmony is said to have prevailed between Constance and her husband. Her name is repeatedly associated with his in his charters, as is also that of his mother, the Countess Havoise⁴.

A charter of the Princess Constance for the bestowment of lands on the monastery of Quimperle, is still extant, and contains some curious allusions. It is as follows:—"In the name of the eternal and undivided Trinity, and in virtue of the blessed Cross, I, Constance Duchess of Bretagne, wife of Alan Duke of Bretagne, and daughter of William King of England, having, in a full assembly of the chapter, been made a member of the fraternity of

¹ Ex. Arch. Majoris Monast., ap. Martène, Thes. Anecd.; vol. i., col. 317.

² Actes de Bretagne, vol. i., col. 465.

³ Preuves de l'Histoire de Bretagne, Maurice, ut supra.

⁴ Du Moulin, p. 220. Preuves de Bret., vol. i., col. 463-4.

Quimperle, now in presence of my lord and husband, Alan Duke of Bretagne, and the primates of his court, do give in perpetuity to the monastery of Quimperle, the cities which, before my marriage, the fore-named duke had promised to that place, and to confirm the memory of this gift, I bestow my marble chalice on the said brothers, as plenary investiture of these cities; and still further to confirm the gift, being often previously entreated by them, I have received from them two handsome palfreys." The witnesses of this deed are "Alan, Duke of Bretagne,—I, Constance, the Countess, who have given and granted this—Benedict, bishop of Nantes, and abbot of the fore-mentioned place, into whose hands it is given and yielded—I, Gerard, the chaplain of the Countess, who, being commanded, have dictated this, with the other two chaplains my companions. Dated at Quimperle, on a festival day (Lammas) the 1st of August, 1088¹."

It is evident, from this mention of the chaplains of the duchess, that she had a separate household of her own, and she seems to have ever been treated with great respect as well as sincere affection, by her husband. The pains taken by Constance to assure us that it was not till she had been *often* entreated, that she consented to accept the palfreys which the gratitude of the monks pressed upon her, shows that times had somewhat improved with them, since her spouse had been forced to sell his lands to the same monks for the sake of a war-steed.

The young duchess did not live long after the date of this charter. She died on the 13th of August, 1090, four years after her marriage, when she had scarcely attained her thirty-third year². She was much lamented by her subjects³. Respect for her memory, and a wish to gratify

¹ Actes de Bretagne, vol. i., col. 464.

² Chronicon Britannia, p. 559, Chron. Kemperl., p. 562, Chron. Burgensis Cœnob., p. 563, Chron. Briocense, p. 566, Bouquet, vol. xii.

³ Benoit, f. 248 b. col. 2.

her bereaved spouse, assembled most of the prelates and nobles of the land at the solemnization of her obsequies. She was buried with great pomp at St. Melans, near Rhedon, close to the sepulchre of the late Duke Hoel, her father-in-law¹. In the year 1672, her tomb was discovered, and opened. Some fragments of the woollen stuff and skin in which, according to the fashion of the times, the body had been wrapped, still remained, inclosing the bones, and also a leaden cross, on which her epitaph was engraved; though partially effaced, her name and those of her husband and father, were still legible, along with the date of her death².

In 1093, Duke Alan was married again to Ermengarde, daughter of Foulk Rechin, Earl of Anjou, and she became the mother of his son and successor, Conan³.

Alan accompanied his brother-in-law, Duke Robert, of Normandy, to the Holy Land, in 1096⁴, but he did not well support his former military fame, for his name is scarcely mentioned by the historians of the first crusade. Weary of the toils of government, rendered more burdensome by his failing health, he, in the year 1112, resigned the reins into the hands of his son Conan, and retired to the monastery of Rhedon, in which retreat he passed the last few years of his life, and where he died on the 13th of October, A.D. 1119⁵.

Judging from the portrait of Earl Alan, engraved on

¹ Actes de Bret., vol. i., col. 464.

² It is as follows:—"Anno ab Incarn. Domini millesimo (nonagesimo) Indictione XIII. Epacta (XVII.) Concurrente uno Idus Aug. obiit Constantia Britanniae Comitissa, Comitis Alani Fergens conjux nobilissima, Willielmi regis Anglorum filia." Preuves de l'Hist. de Bret., ut sup. The words in parenthesis are supplied, having been effaced from the cross.

³ Wil. Tyr., p. 518, Chron. Brioc., p. 566, Ord. Vit., p. 596, Bouquet, vol. xii.

⁴ Maurice, vol. i., p. 83.

⁵ Maurice, vol. i., p. 90. Lobineau, vol. i., p. 128. Chron. Brit., p. 559, Bouquet, vol. xii.

his seal, his personal appearance was prepossessing; he is represented with short curling hair and beard, but wearing neither coronet nor helmet, a very unusual circumstance in ancient seals; his robe is clasped on the right shoulder, and in one hand he brandishes a sword¹.

A curious portrait of him is also engraved in Lobineau, from a picture in the monastery of Rhedon. The expression of the face is somewhat pleasing,—the costume quite in the oriental style. The broad brim of the hat is lined with fur, and from the back of it depends a long white scarf or veil; the robe, of splendid damask, is long and loose, fringed at the bottom of the skirt and sleeves with rich furs; and round the throat is a full plaited frill, which completes the attire.

The portrait of his second wife, the Duchess Ermen-garde, which was painted at the same time with the duke's, is in the highest extravagance of the eastern mode, so prevalent during the crusading ages; but for the sake of good taste, it is to be hoped that it was widely different from the costume worn by the bride of his youth, the graceful and accomplished Princess Constance.

¹ Maurice, *Preuves*, vol. i., plate 5.

ADELA,

YOUNGEST DAUGHTER OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

CHAPTER II.

Her spirited character—Early lover—He assumes the cowl—Stephen of Blois demands her hand—Splendid nuptials—Influence with the earl—Odes addressed to her—Abbot Baldric's cape—Her learning—Stephen taken prisoner—Adela visited by Anselm—Her gifts to churches, &c.—Removal of the bones of St. Helena—Stephen joins the crusade—Adela's regency—Her children—Visited by Anselm—Sickness and miraculous recovery—Aids the King of France—Letter of Hildebert—Stephen's letters—Deserts the crusade—She persuades him to return—His death—Adela settles quarrels between Henry I. and Anselm—Patronizes a love-match—Visit of Prince Boemond and of Pope Paschal—Quarrel with Bishop Ivo—Charter—Receives aid from France—Relinquishes government—Takes the veil at Marcigny—Her correspondence—A supernatural dream—Death of Henry I.—Destinies of Adela's children—Her death and burial.

THIS Princess, although the youngest of King William's daughters, occupies a more prominent place in history than any of her sisters. Her intrepid and spirited character rendered her peculiarly fitted for the important destinies which awaited her; while the zeal with which she protected and patronized the cause of religion, and its ministers, called forth warm tributes of admiration from those who were the sole repositories of the learning of the day; and their gratitude has preserved for us many particulars of her life, which otherwise would have been lost. The

date of Adela's birth has not reached us, but it was, most likely, about the year 1062. Much pains was bestowed on her education; and both in personal appearance and mental endowments, she fully realized the most sanguine hopes of her parents. The rhyming chronicler Benoit tells us there was "no handsomer nor more *valorous* lady in France, nor one who better loved our Lord¹!" Although *we*, in these days, are not disposed to consider *valour* as one of the indispensables to the perfection of female character, it appears to have been otherwise with our chivalric ancestors, for the troubadour-bards apply the epithets of "*la prox et la sage*," as indiscriminately to their heroines as to their heroes.

Some curious particulars with reference to the early life of the Lady Adela, are preserved by Mabillon in his *Annals of St. Benedict*, a work of great value in bringing to light the most authentic records of high antiquity.

There was a certain youth, of one of the noblest families of France, though he possessed no higher sounding name than that of Simon Crispin, Earl of Amiens², the son and heir of Ralph, Earl of Valois and Mantz, who, in order that he might become an accomplished chevalier, was sent by his father to be educated in the court of William of Normandy. Here the gallant boy became such a favourite with both William and Matilda, that they determined in due time to bestow upon him the hand of his young playmate, the Princess Adela—and the thing was looked upon as settled. Whether the young lady herself regarded him with an equally partial eye, we cannot ascertain; but the presumptions are, that he entertained for her a sincere and strong affection.

¹ "N'entra en reaume de France
 Dame de meillor contenance
 N'à ceu tems de plus grand valor,
 Ne plus amast notre seignor."—Harl. MS. 1717, f. 249, col. 1.

² *L'Art de Vérifier*, vol. xii., p. 185.

In 1074, on the death of his father, the young earl was called away to assume possession of his dominions; but he had to inherit his father's quarrels as well as his estates, and was at once plunged into a war with Philip of France, and with several of the neighbouring lords, in all of which his gallantry brought him off victorious. During his troubles, Robert II., Earl of Auvergne, offered him his assistance, and the hand of his daughter Judith, in marriage. This placed the young knight in an awkward situation, for he feared to offend his powerful neighbour by a refusal, and yet was unwilling to violate his faith to his fiancée, the Lady Adela. From this dilemma, however, his ingenuity rescued him; the proposal was accepted, and the nuptials solemnized; but directly afterwards, probably as the result of some previous arrangement between the parties, the bride, with the consent of her husband, took the veil¹. This circumstance proves that his heart was already pledged to the Norman maiden, for had he regarded her with indifference, he had certainly a good excuse for breaking his engagement. But a most extraordinary change was about to take place in his character.

Bred in the court of the pious Matilda of Flanders, Simon had imbibed an early reverence for justice and humanity, and was greatly shocked to find that the father, of whom he had seen so little, had been guilty of many cruel acts of oppression, and that even his burial-place, the castle of Montdidier, had been wrongfully and fraudulently obtained.

Full of pious concern for the soul of his parent, he consulted Pope Gregory on the subject; and the pontiff commanded that his body should be removed from such unhallowed ground, and masses daily said for his soul. The son hastened to comply; a tomb was prepared in consecrated ground, and the remains disinterred from their

¹ Baluze, *Hist. de la Maison d'Auvergne*, vol. i., p. 56.

resting-place in the castle of Montdidier. When the coffin was brought above ground, a strong desire possessed the mind of Simon to gaze once more upon the face of his buried sire; but the earl had now occupied the house appointed for all living upwards of three years, and decay had made rapid progress. The ghastly spectacle presented before the eyes of the terrified youth, when the lid of the coffin was raised, produced such an effect upon his mind, that from that moment, it took a completely new bias.

His splendid dominions, his noble exploits, his young betrothed, were all forgotten in the horrid spectacle of the final destiny of our frail mortality, and he resolved from that hour to devote himself exclusively to preparation for a world where death and decay are no more. Just in the crisis, when his mind was struggling beneath the weight of these emotions, he was summoned to the court of King William, to consummate his marriage with the Lady Adela, who had reached the mature age of fifteen. Thither accordingly he repaired, not to fulfil his engagements, but to request, that on account of the plea of consanguinity which he urged, he might be permitted first to take a journey to Rome, and sue for a dispensation. This was willingly granted; but no sooner had he passed the limits to which the power of his intended father-in-law might be supposed to extend, than he turned aside to a German monastery, and immediately took the decisive vows: here he gave himself up to the most rigorous fasting and penance; but, still not satisfied, he shortly afterwards resolved to lead the life of a hermit; and during the remainder of his existence a single meal a day, composed of bread and water, with wild apples or a few vegetables, formed his sole sustenance. His conduct, however, excited no displeasure in the minds of William and Matilda; for, in the year 1081, when the object of his once passionate attachment had left her father's court as the bride of another, the lonely hermit,

now celebrated over half Europe for his sanctity and austerity, paid a visit to these his early friends, and endeavoured to reconcile the dissensions which had sprung up between King William and his eldest son Robert. The following year terminated the life of this singular character: he died at Rome, whether he had gone on an important mission. In honour of his sanctity, he was honoured with a burial in the vault of the popes; and Queen Matilda showed her respect for his memory, by making a munificent present of gold and silver for the erection of his tomb, which, to the present day, is an object of curiosity for travellers¹.

It was in 1075 that the hand of Adela was first sought in marriage by Stephen, or, as he was sometimes called, Henry, Earl of Meaux and Brie, the son and heir of Theobald, Earl of Blois and Chartres; and this young nobleman was far from being an unequal match even for the daughter of the English king, for many lands in Champagne, besides the earldoms of Brie, Meaux, Blois, and Chartres, formed part of his ancestral dominions; and he is said to have possessed as many castles as there are days in the year². He also bore the title of Earl Palatine³. At this period, however, King William, as we have already seen, had other designs for his daughter; and the messengers who had waited upon him in England to press the suit of Earl Stephen, were dismissed with an unfavourable answer⁴. Some years elapsed before the proposals were again made; at length, in 1080, Stephen dispatched an

¹ Annal. St. Bened., vol. v., p. 183. Hugh de Fleury, Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 797. L'Art de Vérifier, vol. xii., p. 189.

² Ord. Vit., pp. 573-4 and 810-11, Rer. Norm. Script. Ant. Nogent, Hist. des Croisades, Guizot's French Chronicles, vol. ix., p. 72.

³ The title of Palatine was derived from some office which he held in the palace of the French sovereigns: but what its precise nature was, in the case of Stephen, we are not informed. *Pithæus de Palatinis*, p. 6.

⁴ Mabillon, Ann. St. Bened., vol. v., p. 95.

embassy, headed by Geoffry of Chaumont, to Normandy, where the king then was, to renew his demand, and this time it was received with more consideration¹. The king assembled a council of his trusty nobles to consider the propriety of thus disposing of the hand of his daughter. The wish to strengthen mutual friendship with the powerful house of Blois prevailed, and the suit was gained.

Whether any previous intercourse had taken place between the parties, we have no means of ascertaining; but from the close proximity of the earldom of Chartres to Normandy, it is likely that Stephen had been a frequent visitor at the court of King William. The nuptial ceremonies were solemnized without delay at Breteuil, amid general rejoicings; but these were quite eclipsed by the splendid entertainments and enthusiastic joy with which the young earl and his royal bride were received in their own capital of Chartres, where their marriage was again celebrated at the church of Notre Dame². The young couple testified their satisfaction at the union, by heaping favours upon Geoffry of Chaumont, who had been the procurator on the occasion³.

Ever after the period of her marriage, the name of Adela is associated with that of her husband in all public acts; and the frequency with which she is mentioned by contemporary historians affords plain proof that in energy of character, Stephen was far surpassed by his better half. The earliest charter of this earl now known, is that of the foundation of the priory of St. John the Baptist, near Blois, which he endowed for the sake of his own soul, those of his wife and parents, and of William and Matilda, king and queen of England, "Adela the countess consenting thereto⁴." A curious instance of this sort of joint

¹ Ex Gest. Amb. domin. Acherius Spicilegium, vol. iii., p. 275.

² Ord. Vit., p. 605, Hugo Floriac, p. 798, Gul. Gemet., p. 582, Bouquet, vol. xii.

³ Acher. Spicil., ut sup.

⁴ Bernier, Histoire de Blois, Preuves, p. xiii.

authority remains even to the present day, in a very ancient inscription, still to be seen over three of the gates in the town of Blois, testifying the grant of some important privileges to the citizens, by "Stephen the earl, and Adela the countess," on condition of their enclosing the castle of the town with a wall, which, if any one should violate, the anathema of Dathan, and curse of Abiram, are somewhat unmercifully invoked against them¹.

Baldric of Anjou, the courtly abbot of Bourgeuil, who may almost be styled the poet laureate of the Conqueror and his family, in a Latin ode addressed to Adela, draws a comparison between her and her father, in which he confidently asserts, that she equals him in courage, and would have borne arms herself, "did not custom forbid her tender limbs to be weighed down with armour." In one respect she greatly excels her warlike sire, "for she applauds verses, and knows how to discriminate their merits; nor," he slyly adds, "does she ever permit the poet to go without his due reward." He says, too, that not only was she able to discriminate the comparative value of poets and their productions, but that she herself was a proficient in the art of versifying, and had a "copious torrent of language²." He then launches out into strains of extravagant admiration of her beauty, chastity, grace, and learning, declaring he should never have ventured to present to her his humble song, had not she herself requested it, and graciously accepted his former verses³. We will not vouch for the disinterestedness of this worthy monk, for, in his next ode, after making a comparison between Adela and the moon, he goes on to remind her of a cape, most probably embroidered by her own fair fingers, which she had promised to give him, and which to him appears to be an affair of great importance. The sim-

¹ Bernier, *Histoire de Blois*, p. 293.

² *Histoire Littéraire de la France*, vol. vii., p. 152; vol. ix., p. 131.

³ Duchesne, *Rer. Franc. Script. Ant.*, vol. iv., pp. 272-3.

plicity with which, in the midst of his eulogiums of his royal mistress, he constantly reverts to the piece of monkish finery on which his heart was so intent, is ludicrous in the extreme; and from his description of it, it seems to have been a present worth receiving, for it was to be "a cape set round with Phrygian gold, a cape decorating with gems the breast of the wearer, who, whenever he had it on, would constantly bear with him the remembrance of the giver;" then follows a long dissertation on good deeds in general, and especially on the virtue of enriching the Church, and he concludes by bidding her "beware not to forget the *fringe* of the cape¹." Adela frequently bestowed gifts of a similar nature upon her favourite prelates. A letter is extant, written to her by Hildebert, Bishop of Mans, in which he excuses the boldness of his address on the score of poverty, "which makes a man bold," and entreats that she, who is in the habit of far surpassing her promises, will not leave him destitute of the chasuble which she has promised². From the fact of these odes and letters being written to her in Latin, it is evident she was a proficient in that language. We are told that she was equally skilful in Greek³; and Benoit says, that she was of marvellous great learning, and that there was no lady of better renown⁴.

The few earlier years of Adela's married life were unblessed by children; although the dates of the birth of her sons are not given, the occurrences of their after life afford presumptive evidence that they were not born, until their father had succeeded to the full possession of his ancestral dominions on the death of Earl Theobald, which took place in the year 1090⁵. On his first acces-

¹ Duchesne, *Rer. Franc. Script. Ant.*, vol. iv., p. 273, et seq.

² Hildebert's Letters, Beaugendre's edit., book iii., No. II., col. 170.

³ Reusner, *Basilicon Stirps Genealogica*, pt. ii., p. 7.

⁴ Fol. 210, col. 1.

⁵ This is ascertained by a charter of Stephen's, preserved by Mabillon,

sion to power, Stephen's conduct was characterized by a rashness, which for a while deprived his countess of the society of her husband; for he entered into a quarrel with his lord paramount, the King of France, which he was ill-prepared to support, and, after sustaining a severe defeat, was taken prisoner and detained in captivity until he gave hostages for his release, and swore not to conduct himself in like manner again¹. He kept his word, and soon after gave a marked token of his fidelity by assisting the king against some rebel lords, and killing with his own hand Bouchard, Earl of Corbeil, their chief².

From the period at which the Countess Adela, in conjunction with her spouse, assumed the reins of government, she showed herself a worthy daughter of the munificent Matilda of Flanders, by the number and value of her benefactions to the Church. She maintained the most friendly intercourse with the talented and able Ivo, Bishop of Chartres, and under her auspices the cathedral of that city, which had formerly been an unadorned structure of wood, was rebuilt of stone, and in a handsome style of architecture³. Her name is associated with that of Stephen, in a charter by which it was freed from all taxation, on condition of anniversary services being yearly performed for the earl and countess⁴. In several other charters of monastic benefactions, Stephen informs us that they were made not only with the consent, but also by the special request and intercession of Adela.

To Eustace, the Abbot of St. Peter's at Chartres, they made a singular grant, viz.: that of their maid Legarde

dated in 1096, in which he speaks of the death of his father as having taken place six years before. *Annal. St. Bened.*, vol. v., Append. 40. See also Hugo Floriac, *de Modern. Franc. Reg.*, Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 797.

¹ *Hist. Franc. Frag.*, Bouquet, vol. xii., pp. 1-2.

² *Arch. Suger*, Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 37.

³ Rouillard, *Histoire de l'Eglise de Chartres*, pt. 1, fol. 132. Ivo himself built a magnificent pulpit for the cathedral. *Ibid.*, fol. 134.

⁴ Martene's *Collectio amplissima*, vol. i., col. 621.

with all her children, to serve the congregation of the monks. Earl Stephen tells us that he and his wife both sign the deed with their own hands, and the name of Godefry, Adela's cupbearer, appears as witness¹.

She merited and obtained the praises of the ecclesiastics and especially of Ivo, Bishop of Chartres, by the zeal she evinced in promoting the reformation of the monastery of St. Martin's de Valle near Chartres, which had fallen into a deplorable condition both as regarded its temporal and spiritual affairs²; and some time afterwards we again find her engaged in monastic reformation where it was greatly needed, among the disorderly nuns of St. Faro, on which occasion she wrote several energetic letters to Bishop Ivo³.

Shortly after this, the earl and countess, with several members of the noble house of Blois, attended a religious festival, to which the chroniclers of the day give an unusual degree of importance—namely, the removal of the remains of St. Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, to a place prepared for them in the neighbourhood of Altvilliers. This was by no means the first removal to which the bones of this imperial matron (if they were really such) had been subjected, by the piety of her devout admirers. The day fixed upon was the 28th of October, 1095, the festival of St. Simon and St. Jude. We quote from Notcher, Abbot of Altvilliers, the original suggester and presiding genius of the ceremonials. "At last the long-desired day arrived, and fell on a Sunday⁴—all the great lights of the monastic order attended, with

¹ Collection des Cartulaires de France, by M. Guerard, vol. ii., No. 39, published among the *Documens inedits relatifs à l'Histoire de France*, which are now in active course of publication by the French Government.

² *Annal. Bened.*, vol. v., pp. 311-12.

³ Ivo's Letters, Bouquet, vol. xv., pp. 101-2.

⁴ Eadmer, Selden's edit., p. 79.

⁵ The authenticity of this date is confirmed by the coincidence named in the text, for in 1095 the 28th of October did fall on a Sunday.

many archbishops and bishops, and of the secular powers were present Earl Stephen and Adela his wife, Constance, daughter of Philip, King of France, wife of Hugh, Earl of Treves, Stephen's brother, with many others, respectable in their way, whom I shall not here enumerate. Not only France, but even Lorraine, delighted to send her pious sons to the obsequies of such a queen—for how should not all Christianity applaud her to whom all are so greatly indebted? There is a certain place in prospect of all Altvilliers, called by the inhabitants Montiscola—where, on the high brow of a hill, a promontory stretches out into a convenient flat, fit for the reception of such venerated limbs. Here a tent was erected, large enough to accommodate the earl and countess with their family, and all those of the sacred order. A consultation was then held as to what hour of the day the ceremony should take place, and we agreed that it should be after the mystery of the holy resurrection had been celebrated by Hugh, Bishop of Soissons; this being over, brethren of proper gravity were selected, who carried the relics of so glorious dust to the appointed place of interment, where the golden urn was opened, and, enclosed with the bones, was found this writing:—‘*Corpus sanctæ Helenæ reginæ, matris Constantini, sine capite.*’ ‘The body of St. Helena the queen, the mother of Constantine, saving the head!’ The sacred pledges were then deposited in another vase and re-interred, &c.” As a sequel to the history, we are told, that Earl Stephen, as the person of greatest dignity, was appointed to present the offering at the tomb, and that he gratified the monks of Altvilliers still further by granting them some valuable privileges and immunities. Many miracles were afterwards wrought at this tomb, which became no small source of gain to the monastery of Altvilliers¹. One can scarcely help fancying that the

¹ Mabillon's *Ann. St. Bened.*, vol. v., p. 349. *Gallia Christina*, vol. xi., *Inst.*, col. 32.

Abbot Notcher, who was the discoverer, or perchance inventor of these *singularly* well-attested relics, would congratulate himself on the success of the pious fraud by which his convent arose to such reputation.

The grand religious movement which, in the year 1096, shook Europe to its centre, when the trumpet-voice of an obscure monk sent thousands and tens of thousands of her sons, like a mighty torrent, to the East, placed the Countess of Blois in a new and responsible position, for her husband, in company with his brother-in-law, Duke Robert of Normandy, was one of the gallant host of nobles who joined the first crusade¹.

While the preparations were making for his departure, the earl resided with his countess and their young family at the castle of Colomiers, which was pleasantly situated on the river of Morin, in the vicinity of Brie². From the circumstance that several charters of Adela are dated from this place, it seems to have been a favourite retreat of hers. When just on the eve of setting out, Stephen bestowed large benefactions on the monastery of Marmoutier, that prayers might be offered for the pardon of his past sins, for his safe return from his long and perilous expedition, and for the welfare of the Lady Adela and her children during his absence³. The gift bestowed was part of the wood of Leonne, with permission to the monks of Marmoutier to cut down wood in the neighbouring forests for their own use, to send their cattle, especially their swine, of which they kept large herds, to feed there without paying the customary pasture-money, and to appropriate for their own benefit the wild boars and deer with which the forest abounded. The care of

¹ Ord. Vit., Rer. Norm. Script., p. 724. Fulcher Carnot., Rer. Franc. Script., vol. v., p. 820. William Arch. Tyre, Bongarsius, Gesta Dei per Francos, vol. x., p. 2, pt. 642. Chron. Viridum., Labbæus Bibliotheca, MSS. vol. i., p. 241.

² Vaissette, Geograph. historique, vol. ii., p. 449.

³ Ann. St. Ben., vol. v., Append. XL.

executing this grant was left with the countess, who made it her first business to have the allotted lands measured out, &c., and when the preliminary arrangements were completed, confirmed the grant in a separate charter, bearing her signature and sealed with her seal¹. The monks of Marmoutier were special favourites with her, and she more than once settled the differences which arose between them and the canons of Blois in a manner, that for a wonder proved satisfactory to both parties. Another monastic feud between the monks of Rebais and those of St. Foi de Conques, in reference to the church of Colomiers, was also left in her hands by her husband, with a charge to settle it as expeditiously as possible. She accordingly summoned both parties to appear before her tribunal, and joining the Bishops of Meaux and Troyes and the Abbot of Lagny with herself, as adjudicators, she settled the affair in favour of the latter party².

The principal military strength of the provinces of Blois and Chartres of course followed Earl Stephen in his expedition, and Adela was left, almost unsupported, to take charge of the government. She had become the mother of eight children, the eldest of whom, named William after his royal grandfather, was of a very unpromising disposition, and though her second son Theobald inherited her talents, yet he was far too young to share in her cares. Anxious to secure for him and his brother Stephen the benefits of a superior education, she sent them to Orleans and placed them under the care of one "Master Geoffry," a learned monk, who afterwards became Abbot of Croyland³, but she appears to have herself superintended the education of her other children, Adela, Matilda, Eudo, Philip, Humbert, and Henry.

¹ Ann. St. Bened., vol. v., p. 438.

² Histoire des Comtes de Champagne et Brie, vol. i., p. 88.

³ Peter Blois' Cont. Ingulph., Gale, vol. i., p. 121.

Onerous as were the duties devolving upon her, the Countess Adela was fully equal to their competent discharge. The absence of almost all the neighbouring turbulent nobles, who had joined the crusading armies, rendered it no difficult matter to maintain tranquillity, and she took great pains to keep up a friendly intercourse with the court of France; while the severe censures fulminated by the Church against all who should venture to attack the lands of the absent crusaders, threw a protecting shield around the province, and the vigour with which she attended to the administration of justice, proved that her authority was not to be trifled with¹. Perhaps too, the remembrance of her illustrious descent might serve to procure her additional respect. The memory of her mighty sire was cherished by her with a proud fondness, of which traces still remain, in the public deeds of "Adela the Countess," where her title of "daughter of William the elder, the most glorious King of England," always precedes that of "wife of the noble Stephen, Earl Palatine."

In the year 1097, when the quarrels between William Rufus and Archbishop Anselm forced the latter to leave England, he was liberally entertained on his way to Rome, by the Countess of Blois; the reverence she felt for the sanctity of his character and his great learning, induced her to become his pupil for a time², chiefly from the hope of obtaining assistance in the religious education of the infant family who were now rising around her.

Towards the beginning of the following year, 1098, Adela was seized with a violent fever, which was so obstinate that for some time her recovery was despaired of. The anxiety of her attendants summoned to her bedside the most celebrated physicians of France and Normandy, and even from beyond the seas, but all their

¹ L'Art de Vérifier, vol. xi., p. 363. Bernier, Hist. de Blois, p. 294.

² Mabillon, Annal. St. Bened., vol. v., p. 349.

multitudinous potions were in vain,—the disease still continued to increase. In this extremity, recourse was had to the miraculous power of a certain St. Agiles, who was buried at the monastery of Resbac, in La Brie, and whose reputation for wonderful cures had spread far and wide. Hither, accordingly, the Lady Adela was conveyed, and for two days and nights her feverish couch was spread in the Chapel of Resbac, immediately before the tomb of the saint, and at night she was permitted neither food nor drink. During these hours of stillness we are told, “she felt the divine virtue coming upon her, the burning fever-heat passed gradually away, and what could not be obtained by the aid of medicine was obtained through the intercession of the blessed St. Agiles¹.”

Whatever share in her recovery the sceptics of the present day may be disposed to attribute to the coolness and repose, and still more to the absence of all the hosts of physicians and their quackeries, the Countess herself ascribed it solely to the intercessions of the saint, and testified her gratitude by the offering of a splendid altar-cloth, richly embroidered, “which,” says the monkish historian, from whom we have derived these particulars, “is still preserved in that monastery, and on festival days is always placed behind the sacred cross².”

About this time we find Adela sending a band of 100 soldiers to Louis VI. of France, to aid him against some rebels, and the equipment and discipline of her troops were considered admirable. Her talents for government called forth warm expressions of admiration from Hildebert, Bishop of Mans, who wrote her a letter on the subject, commencing as follows:—

“In the absence of your husband, the care of the earldom weighs more heavily upon you; yet you, a

¹ Mabillon, *Annal. St. Bened.*, vol. v., p. 349

² *Ord. Vit.*, Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 706.

woman and alone, so administer it that you need neither the aid of a husband nor of precarious counsellors. In you is all that is needed to guide the helm of the state. Truly, such an assemblage of good qualities in a woman is a work of grace, not of nature. The grace of God has loaded you with splendid titles, and you do honour alike to your dignity and your sex. Yet remember your feminine character, whilst you unite chastity to beauty, and repress the hauteur of the countess, whilst you preserve clemency in the midst of your power¹."

The rest of the letter strongly urges upon her the beauty of clemency, from which we may conclude that it was not one of the cardinal virtues of her character.

But we must leave Adela, ably discharging her duties as regent, and securing general respect, whilst we briefly recount the fortunes of her crusading lord.

Two of his letters to his wife are still remaining, which give the best account of his progress. The first of them was written after the surrender of Nice, and runs as follows:—

"Earl Stephen to the Countess Adela, his sweetest friend and wife, sendeth whatever his mind can devise of best or most benignant. Be it known to thee, beloved, that I had a pleasant journey, in all honour and bodily safety, as far as Rome. I have already written from Constantinople very accurately the particulars of my peregrination, but, lest any misfortune should have happened to my messenger, I rewrite these letters to thee. I came, by God's grace, to the city of Constantinople with great joy. The Emperor received me worthily and most courteously, and even lovingly as his own son, and gave me most liberal and precious gifts, so that there is not in the whole army duke, or earl, or any potentate, whom he more trusts and favours than me. Indeed, my

¹ Hildebert's Letters, book I., No. iii., col. 5.

beloved, his Imperial Majesty has and still does often recommend to me that we should send to him one of our sons, and he promises to bestow on him so many and great honours that he shall have no cause to envy us. I tell you in truth that there is not such a man living under heaven; he enriches all our princes most liberally, relieves all the soldiers with gifts, refreshes all the poor with feasts. Near the city of Nice there is a castle called Civitot, near which runs an arm of the sea, by which the emperor's ships sail day and night to Constantinople, bearing food to the camp for innumerable poor, which is daily distributed to them. Your father, my beloved, has done many and great things, but he is nothing to this man. These few things I have written to you about him, that you may have some idea what he is." Stephen goes on to relate his departure from Constantinople, crossing the Hellespont, arriving at the city of Nicomedia in Thrace, "in which the blessed martyr, Pantaleon, suffered for Christ," and the progress thence to Nice, with its 300 high towers and wonderful walls; gives the particulars of its surrender to the Emperor; of Alexius' near approach to the Christian camp, where all the leaders, except Raymond of St. Giles and Stephen himself, visited him, they remaining to guard the camp from any sudden attack, and expresses his hope that in five weeks more they shall be at Jerusalem, unless they meet with resistance at Antioch¹.

Showy but superficial, eloquent in council, graceful and commanding in person, but wavering in the moment of decisive action, and cowardly in danger, Stephen of Blois, in the first instance, so won the admiration of his brother-crusaders, that he was elected chief of their council²; but

¹ Mabillon, *Museum Italicum*, vol. i., pp. 237, 238. Bernier, *Hist. de Blois*, *Preuves*, p. 24.

² Peter Tudebode, Duchesne, *Rer. Franc. Script. Ant.*, vol. iv., p. 799. Mabillon, *Museum Italicum*, vol. i., pt. 2, pp. 130-134. He is thus mentioned by Tasso—

the hardships that had to be encountered by these gallant warriors, were far greater than, in their enthusiastic self-devotion, they had ever calculated upon. In their passage through the mountains of Phrygia, after the surrender of Nice, their troops were fearfully thinned by want and famine, and their frequent skirmishes with the clouds of Turkish horse, that hung upon their flanks and rear. At length they sat down before the walls of Antioch, but week after week passed on, while the impregnable bastions still proudly frowned defiance upon them; famine raged terribly among the troops, and an innumerable infidel host, gathering from all quarters, completed their discouragement, and tried the temper of even the stoutest-hearted¹.

When the siege had lasted twenty-three weeks, Earl Stephen again wrote to his wife, as follows:—

“Stephen the Earl to Adela his sweetest and most beloved wife, and to his dearest children, and to all his faithful subjects great and small, the grace and blessing of perfect health. You may most certainly believe, dearest, that this messenger, whom I have sent to you, left me before Antioch well and safe, and by God’s grace enlarged with all prosperity, and with the select army of Jesus Christ, we have had our seat there for twenty-three successive weeks. Know certainly, my beloved, that I have now twofold more gold and silver and other riches than you allotted to me when I departed from you. For all our chiefs, by common counsel of the whole army, have appointed me, though unwilling, their Lord Provisor and Governor of all their actions.” He proceeds to relate the progress of the expedition after the taking of Nice;

“Il conte di Carnuti indi succede,
Potente di consiglio e pro di mano.”

Gerusalemme Liberata, Canto I., stanza 40.

¹ Pet. Tud., ut supra. William of Tyre, Bongarsius, vol. i., p. 692. Fulcher Carnot., Rer. Franc. Script. Ant., vol. iv., p. 826.

the victory gained over the Turks, the acquisition of Romania and Cappadocia; their preparations for the siege of Antioch; the impregnable strength of the city; the multitudes of Turks by whom it was defended; the woes sustained by the Christian host, through famine, &c., causing great discouragement; and the battle at the Bridge of Antioch. Thus far the letter was written by a secretary, but Stephen adds a postscript, which is, of course, the most confidential part of the letter. It runs thus:—"Truly, whilst my chaplain Alexander, the day after Passover, was writing these letters with the greatest haste, part of our troops besieging the Turks obtained a victory over them, by the aid of God, and slew of them sixty soldiers, all whose *heads* they brought into the army. These are but few out of many things which I write to you, dearest, and because I cannot fully express all that is in my mind, dearest, I command that you act well, behave yourself chastely, and treat your children and household well, as becomes you, for as quick as I possibly can, you will certainly see me home. Farewell¹."

It is curious to mark, from an incidental allusion in this letter, that Adela was the *purse-keeper*, since it was she who portioned out to her lord the sums of money which she thought were requisite for his expenses, and he evidently plumes himself a good deal on having increased rather than diminished his stores.

The tone of despondency in which the part of the letter referring to the expedition was penned, gave a true indication of the wavering feelings of the writer. Soon after this was written, a fit of sickness, either real or feigned, confined the Earl of Blois at Alexandretta, but tidings of the increasingly woful state of affairs were constantly reaching him. Mounting his horse, he ascended to the top of a neighbouring hill, from whence the innumerable

¹ Acher's *Spicilegium*, vol. iii., p. 430.

tents of the gathering infidel host were to be seen, like snow-flakes on the plain, and, completely daunted at the spectacle, he galloped back and made instant preparations for his departure to Europe¹. A few hours more, and his knightly reputation had been saved, for the very next day Antioch was taken. As it was, however, Stephen's desertion was the cause of fearful disaster to the Christian host, for the dismal picture he drew of the utter ruin of the European armies, coloured by his own fears, and exaggerated by the natural desire of excusing his retreat, induced the Emperor Alexius to return back with the convoy of provisions which was already on its way to the starving warriors of the cross, and thus inflicted dreadful suffering upon them². Slowly and sadly, the crest-fallen earl made his way back again to France, and re-appeared in his own capital; but here no kindly welcome awaited him. Great was the indignation of the high-spirited Adela at this shameful desertion on the part of her lord; she vowed to give him no rest till he had atoned for his cowardice, and she fulfilled her vow.

In 1101, William, Earl of Poitou, assembled an army in Gascony and Aquitaine, to follow out the splendid conquests already achieved in the East, and Stephen was strongly urged to join him. Adela employed all her woman's eloquence for this object. "Far be it from you, my lord," said she, "to suffer such a weight of opprobrium as now rests upon your name; recal the gallant deeds of your youth, and seize the arms of a noble warfare. How will the Christians of the whole world exult to hear of your prowess, while the infidels tremble at

¹ Fulch. Carnot., p. 827, ut supra. Ex Gest. Ambians. dom. Acher. Spicilegium, vol. iii., p. 275.

² Robert the Monk, Bongarsius, vol. i., pp. 59, 60. Gesta Tancredi, Thes. Anecd., vol. iii., col. 159. Ralph of Caen says that Stephen told Alexius that were his whole army cooked and served up to the infidels, such was their number that there would not be a morsel for each.—Guizot's Chronicles, vol. xx., p. 150.

their own impending ruin." But Stephen was too sadly familiar with the perils and privations of a crusader's life, to be again dazzled with the meteor blaze of glory, and he was very reluctant to comply; at length, won over by the caressing entreaties of his wife, if not convinced by her arguments, he yielded to her wishes, and joining the crusading bands, left her, never to return again¹. This time, however, he retrieved his character, for he nobly persisted amidst difficulties and dangers, till he reached the holy city itself—but shortly after he was slain, bravely fighting at the siege of Ramula².

We may imagine that some degree of self-reproach would mingle with the natural sorrow which must have agitated the breast of the widowed countess, when the news arrived that her lord had fallen a sacrifice to his generous compliance with her wishes. The very warmth with which she resented anything like a stain upon his knightly honour, proved that she regarded him with sincere affection, even while she must have been aware of the superiority of her own character. With affectionate zeal, her first care was to institute masses to be said for the repose of the soul of her deceased husband, and her liberal donations were several times increased, during the few succeeding years, with the distinct condition that they were to be applied to this very desirable object³. In one of her charters, she enjoins the further condition that the monks shall every day supply the wants of some pauper

¹ Ord. Vit., p. 684, Bouquet, vol. xii. Fulch. Carnot., Rer. Franc. Script. Ant., vol. v., p. 849. William of Tyre, book x., p. 787. Malmsbury, p. 149.

² Fulcher Carnot., p. 850. Ord. Vit. says he was taken prisoner by the Egyptians, and murdered, but we have preferred to follow the testimony of Fulcher of Chartres, a countryman of Stephen, who was present at the first crusade, first as his chaplain, and then as that of Raymond of Toulouse.

³ Ann. St. Ben., vol. v., pp. 477, 438. Cartulaires de France, vol. ii., Nos. x., xiv., lvii., lxxviii. Bernier, Hist. de Blois, Preuves, p. v.

mendicant, and that, on her own death, an anniversary shall be celebrated for her¹.

The position of the Countess Adela was not materially altered by the decease of the earl. During the minority of her sons, she still remained their guardian and undisputed regent of the province², generally associating their names with her own in her public acts—especially that of the young Earl Theobald, her second son, whom she chose as the successor to the earldom, on account of the imbecile and degenerate character of her eldest son William³.

In the Easter of the year 1103, Adela's old friend and tutor, Archbishop Anselm, who had renewed with Henry I. his former contests about supremacy in the point of investitures, arrived at Chartres on his way to Rome. The countess, whose love for the old prelate induced her to overlook his opposition to her brother, ministered in the most liberal manner to his wants, and she, in conjunction with Ivo, Bishop of Chartres, succeeded in dissuading him from prosecuting his journey at once, on account of the intense summer heats prevailing. She thus secured the advantage of his society until autumn, when he resumed his journey⁴.

Soon after his departure, Adela was again attacked by a severe illness, so dangerous that for some time she was supposed to be near her end. Anselm was then travelling homewards from Rome, with Eadmer, his faithful friend and companion, and afterwards his biographer, when, being informed of the sickness of his former patroness, he hastened to pay her a visit at her Castle of Blois, whither Eadmer accompanied him. On their arrival, they found the countess already recovering, though still in a state of

¹ Mabillon, vol. v., p. 493.

² Gul. Gemet., p. 584, Bouquet, vol. xii.

³ Hearne's William of Newbridge, p. 27.

⁴ Eadmer's Life of Anselm, p. 72. Anselm's Letters, book iii., No. 76.

great debility¹. They were handsomely entertained for some days, and meanwhile she elicited from Anselm all the particulars of the disagreement between himself and the king. Great was the concern of the pious Adela to find that her brother was actually under sentence of excommunication—and she persuaded Anselm to return with her to Chartres, and remain there, whilst she immediately set about attempting an accommodation—wrote to Henry on the subject, and sent special ambassadors with her letters. The king had suffered too much from the powerful weapons used by the Church against her refractory sons, not to have become willing to yield a little in his demands, and a meeting was at length arranged to take place between the contending parties. The countess accompanied her reverend friend to the Castle of L'Aigle in Normandy, where they were met by King Henry, and a partial reconciliation was brought about, through the skilful mediation of Adela. The primate did not return to England till some time after, for, although his archbishoprick was restored to him, the question of investiture was left to be settled by the apostolic legate the ensuing Christmas². In Anselm's letter, which he wrote announcing this affair to the Pope, he calls Adela "the most faithful daughter of the Church of God, and most obedient to her precepts³." He seems to have spent a year longer with her, for his signature occurs in an ecclesiastical compensation deed, dated at Chartres, May 24th, 1105⁴.

In the midst of these grave affairs, it is curious to find Adela interesting herself warmly in a love-match which had been contracted between Adelais, a fair damsel to whom she was greatly attached and whom she generally

¹ Eadmer, p. 79.

² Ibid., p. 83. Godwin, de Præsulibus, p. 79. Mabillon, vol. v., p. 474.

³ Bouquet, vol. xv., p. 66.

⁴ Bernier, Preuves, p. viii.

addressed as “cousin¹,” and her lover William², although the parties were within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity; but as the Roman church forbade marriages within the *fourteenth* degree, it was no easy matter always to determine which were and which were not, lawful. Ivo, the grave Bishop of Chartres, addressed a letter on this occasion to his noble mistress, the boldness of which can only be excused by its fearless sincerity³. After remonstrating strongly with her against the protection she was affording to a criminal connection, so contrary to the usual pious strictness of her conduct; he adds in a strain of vehement indignation, “How shall the sword of the spirit placed in my mouth, dare to strike others polluted with similar crimes, if it spares or conceals those so near at hand? May not that word of Scripture be quoted against me, ‘First cast out the beam from thine own eye, and then thou canst see the mote in mine’?” Those who conceal or defend crime, the blessed Ambrosius calls consenting parties.” On one only condition he consents to grant the petition she has sent to him on behalf of the lovers, which is, that they shall swear to consent to a separation until the affair have been duly discussed before the proper authorities⁵. Unfortunately for the curiosity of our fair readers, we are unable to inform them how “the course of true love” ran on in this instance, and can only hope that the noble mediatrix at

¹ Probably the daughter of Adelaide, Countess of Aumale, sister of King William. Bouquet, vol. xv., p. 70, note C.

² William of Breteuil, Lord of Ivry. Bouquet, ut sup., note D.

³ Historical Letters in Bouquet, vol. xv., p. 70. This is not the only occasion on which this bishop displayed similar audacity; for his severe remonstrances with Philip of France, on his adulterous marriage with the beautiful Bertrade de Montfort, Countess of Anjou, lost him the favour of that monarch.—See Ivo’s Letters, *Rer. Franc. Script.*, vol. iv., pp. 217, 218. Butler’s *Lives of the Saints*, vol. v., p. 280.

⁴ So quoted in the original. It will appear that he consulted rather the spirit than the words of Scripture.—See St. Matthew’s Gospel, c. vii., v. 5.

⁵ Ivo’s Letter to Adela, Bouquet, vol. xv., p. 70.

length won her suit. She had certainly no permanent quarrel with Ivo, for in a charter dated June 24th, 1105, from Chartres, he, at her request, confirmed sundry privileges to the church of St. Mary at Burgomede¹.

Adela also received and kindly entertained Agnes of Poictou, the wife of the fierce and reckless Norman baron, Robert de Belesme. This lady had been treated by her husband in the most cruel manner, and kept in strict custody, but at last she contrived to make her escape to the countess².

In spite of the woful fate of Earl Stephen, Adela had not yet lost all her crusading enthusiasm. In 1106, Boemond, the far-famed Prince of Antioch, one of the heroes of the first crusade, made a sort of triumphal passage through the chief cities of Europe, and was everywhere received with joyful acclamations. Nobles hastened to secure him as sponsor to their children, that they might receive at the font the name with which all Europe resounded. The King of France conferred upon him his daughter Constance in marriage, and, in compliance with the invitation of the Countess of Blois, Chartres was the place appointed for the solemnization of the nuptials. King Philip and most of the prelates and nobles of France attended, and were all entertained at a splendid banquet by the Countess, but amidst that brilliant throng, the gallant crusader was selected as the principal object of her attentions. When the feast was over, the illustrious company proceeded to church, and after the celebration of the marriage, a singular scene took place. The heroic bridegroom, mounting the orchestral stage before the high altar, related to the assembled crowds the stirring tale of his adventures, and, by the most alluring promises of splendid settlements in the East, so inflamed the ardour of the multitude, that many of them

¹ Bernier, *Hist. de Blois*, p 8.

² *Ord. Vit.*, Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 657, and vol. xiii., p. 195.

“left their all to God, and hastened to Jerusalem as to a feast¹.”

But it was not in courtly entertainments and love-quarrels alone, that the Countess Adela had to exercise her powers.

In 1107, she was honoured by a visit from Pope Paschal. His Holiness having visited France, Ivo, the learned Bishop of Chartres, at the command of his royal mistress, requested him to celebrate the Easter Festival in that city, and the invitation was accepted. The visit of the Pope was not merely one of pleasure. During the few preceding years Adela had been engaged in a series of contests with her clergy, particulars of which are preserved in the letters of Ivo, Bishop of Chartres. The first dispute arose about her interference in attempting to protect a certain pseudo-monk, whose goods had been confiscated by order of Ivo, and he wrote to her, admonishing her to abstain, with her wonted prudence, from a proceeding which would involve the whole principality in discord, since the Church would never tamely submit to have its rights thus intrenched upon². Another contest, which was protracted for several years, arose soon after on the following grounds. The canons of St. Mary's at Chartres, who were mostly men of rank, had, with a degree of aristocratic pride which we should scarcely expect to find creeping into a cloister, entered into a solemn vow that they would admit none to join their company who were either of low birth or foreigners. Some of the household of Adela, probably not mere domestics but the officers of her court, took this conduct in high dudgeon, and engaged the Countess herself in their quarrel. The affair soon reached the ears of Bishop Ivo, and, although he had not been originally a party to the vow, yet when it was made, he chose that the canons

¹ Ord. Vit., Bouquet, vol. xii., pp. 691, 697.

² Bouquet, vol. xv., p. 114.

should not be compelled to break it. Adela, however, who had the temporal power in her own hands, caused the canons to be treated with so much harshness, rendering even their obtaining the necessaries of life difficult, that many of them fled the convent, and went either into France or to the Archbishop of Sens, the Primate of the diocese, for redress. The province was threatened with an interdict, and Adela was zealously exhorted to remove the danger by an immediate submission, and not to listen to the angry suggestions of her servants, who were using all their efforts to induce her to stand firm. At length both parties appealed to Pope Paschal, and the settling of this controversy was one of the objects of his visit to Chartres. The letters of Ivo present us with but one side of the question; none of the documents written on the other side are extant, excepting one letter from Adela's friend, Archbishop Anselm, in which he appeals to the Pope on her behalf. The point in agitation was evidently a revival of the oft-disputed question of the superiority of ecclesiastical over temporal authority; for Ivo, with all his professions of respect for his mistress, was a zealous stickler for the rights and privileges of the Church. The decision of the Pope was, as might be expected, unsatisfactory to Adela, and the contests were frequently afterwards renewed. But whatever disappointment she might have felt on the occasion, she did not allow it to influence her conduct, for she exerted all her energies to render the Pope's visit agreeable, and expended large sums upon his entertainment; receiving in compensation his solemn benediction upon herself and her children at his departure¹.

About this time we find her visiting the town of Meaux, where she presided at a meeting of the Chapter of St. Stephen, in which the Bishop of Meaux bestowed the Abbey of Brie upon the monks of Marmoutier, and

¹ Ord. Vit., p. 691, Bouquet, vol. xii.

on the third of July the same year, she gave a charter, granting to the Church of Ste. Foy at Colomiers, sundry rights and privileges, especially all the tolls and customs received at the market held on the day of the feast of St. Denis, and the revenues which her chaplains had enjoyed from the Church of St. Denis, only excepting the share of her favourite chaplain Raynald, which was to belong to him during his life. The charter commences thus:—

“In the name of the Holy and Indivisible Trinity, I, Adela the Countess, daughter of William, King of England, and of Queen Matilda, for the salvation of my lord, Count Henry, for the redemption of my soul and those of my sons, and also of all my ancestors, besides that confirmation and restitution which, by the judgment and in the audience of many nobles, I made to the monks of Ste. Foy de Colomiers, it has pleased me and my said sons, by the most benign impulse of God, somewhat to enrich the said church by my benefits, in order that the present monks and their successors may be able to perform the service of God and of Ste. Foy their patroness, without heavy penury. First, I grant that if any knight, burgess, servant, freeman, or rustic, among my liege men should decree to bestow on them in charity, from their own possessions, any honour, money, or anything whatever belonging to our dominion, they have from me free license to give, and the monks to receive, the same.”

After this very liberal permission to her liege men “to do what they pleased with their own,” the Countess enumerates her gifts to the monks, which were very liberal, and included the important permission to grind all their corn in two of her mills. In conclusion, she says, “This gift, as above written, I and my son Theobald make in presence of Lord Boniface, Abbot of Conques, and the friars of the said place, and, to corroborate it, we

place it with our own hand on the altar, in the year of the incarnation of our Lord, 1107." The names of eleven witnesses are appended, amongst whom are the keeper of the bed-chamber, the "presbyter," the chancellor, and the favourite chaplain Raynald¹.

In spite of her liberality to the Church, Adela was involved in frequent quarrels with the ecclesiastics, but we generally find that in these she was prompted and urged on by her friends or servants. She violently persecuted Bernard, the Abbot of Bonnevalle, for the supposed murder of one of her servants, named Hugh the Black, and several years elapsed before the contest subsided².

Although in temporal matters her authority was not questioned, and her decision still appealed to as final, in the quarrels of her turbulent barons, yet the discontented parties were not always willing to abide by a verdict which could only be enforced by a woman's arm, and not unfrequently tried by the help of their own good swords, to maintain the law of might against that of right³, but so long as she preserved friendly relationship with the French court Adela had not much to fear.

We have previously noticed the assistance afforded by Adela to the French king in his difficulties, but the tables were afterwards turned. In 1108 she was attacked by Hugh le Puiset, a powerful and reckless noble, whose domains were immediately contiguous to those of Blois⁴. Her young son Theobald was now springing up towards manhood, and already gave ample proofs of that determined spirit and energy of character which afterwards

¹ This charter has recently been printed from Du Puy MS., 227, fol. 116, Bibl. du Roi, Paris, by M. Champollion. *Documens inediti*, vol. ii., p. 5. It is briefly noted by Duplessis, *Histoire de Meaux*, vol. ii., p. 20.

² *Gallia Christina*, vol. viii., col. 1240-1.

³ Ivo's *Letters in Rer. Franc. Script. Ant.*, vol. iv., p. 235.

⁴ Arch. Suger, *Bouquet*, vol. xii., p. 30, *et seq.*

procured for him the title of "the great Earl of Blois." But as yet his feeble arm was no match for his doughty opponent, and the widowed Countess and her brave and beautiful boy hastened to Paris to throw themselves at the feet of Louis, and implore his assistance. Theobald was the spokesman on this occasion, and in a glowing harangue represented the injuries Hugh and his ancestors had inflicted on the kings of France, and also their ravages on the property of the Church, entreating that just retribution might be inflicted. Moved by his representations, the King appointed a commission (of whom Archbishop Suger, from whom we extract this account, was one,) to examine the case; they summoned the rebel before them, and on his declining to appear, the King himself, at the head of his troops, advanced to besiege him in his stronghold, near Thoiri. The young Earl Theobald, burning with revenge, headed the attack on the side of Chartres, in person, and the fortress was taken¹. In 1109, Adela was again on a visit at the French court, on what business does not appear. Her name occurs as witness to a charter of Louis, granting lands to St. Peter's at Chartres, which he says was done publicly in presence of Adela the Countess².

From this time she gradually relinquished the reins of government into the hands of her enterprising son; and, although charters of monastic gifts bearing her name are extant, dated in the years 1110, 1114, 1116, and 1118³, yet she disappears entirely from the theatre of European politics. Indeed, from the energy of Earl Theobald's character, it is probable that as he rose to manhood, he would not very readily brook any direct control, even when exercised by his talented mother: she still, however,

¹ Arch. Suger, *ut sup.* Les Grandes Chroniques de France, Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 163, *et seq.*

² Collection des Cartulaires de France, vol. ii., No. LXvi.

³ In Bouquet's Recueil, Gallia Christina, Mabillon, &c.

resided with him, and they appear to have lived on the most amicable terms, frequently visiting together the neighbouring monasteries, and associating in munificent donations to them'. It was through her influence that Theobald formed those close bonds of alliance with her favourite brother, King Henry, against France, which contributed so much to his future greatness.

In the midst of more stirring occupations, we find that Adela was not neglectful of the interests of learning; for it was at her request that Hugh of St. Mary, a Benedictine monk of Fleury, wrote his history of France, the latter part of which, after her death, was dedicated to her niece, the Empress Matilda².

At length, wearied with the toils of a long and active life, and feeling the infirmities of old age gradually stealing upon her, the venerable Countess resolved to retire from the world, and devote the rest of her days exclusively to the service of God. This resolution appears to have been taken partly in compliance with the wishes of Archbishop Anselm; for, in a letter addressed to his "dearest mistress and mother in God, Ada, the venerable Countess," after expressing warm gratitude for all the kindness and love she had shewn him, he alludes to her retirement as that which she knows to be his highest desire for her, and which he trusts to see accomplished before his death, since then his spirit would depart more gladly from his body³. The place of retreat which she selected was the Cluniac priory of Marcigny⁴, a small town situated on the river Loire, in the diocese of Autun⁵; but

¹ Chron. Nangis, Bouquet, vol. xx., p. 726. Baluze, Hist. Geneal. de la Maison d'Auvergne, vol. ii., Preuves, p. 484.

² Martène, Thesaurus Anecdorum, vol. i., col. 1437. Ann. St. Ben., vol. v. p. 544.

³ Anselm's Letters, book ii., No. 91.

⁴ Ord. Vit., p. 92, Gul. Gemet., p. 584, Bouquet, vol. xii. Gallia Christina, vol. iv., col. 486. Ann. St. Ben., vol. v., p. 438.

⁵ Vaissette, Geog. Hist., vol. ii., p. 461.

even after assuming the veil, she did not altogether relinquish her former connections. Application was again made to her in 1130, to adjust the never-ending differences between the canons of Blois and her favourite monks of Marmoutier. The letters she wrote on this occasion to Geoffry, Bishop of Chartres, and also to her son Theobald, are still extant¹: her former royal titles are all laid aside, and she simply styles herself "Adela, the nun of Margigny." The letter to Earl Theobald contains warm expressions of the maternal tenderness with which she still regarded the son, of whom she was both fond and proud².

Adela was one of the crowd of pious women who went to meet Thurstan, Archbishop of York, when the dissensions between him and the Archbishop of Canterbury, not her favourite Anselm, but one of his successors, drove him to make his appeal to the Pope³. Her old friend Hildebert, Bishop of Mans, wrote several letters to her in her seclusion. In the first of these he expresses great rejoicing at her religious profession—that she, who had been of a high spirit, had become poor in spirit—that from being a splendid countess, girt with obsequious attendants from the very cradle, she had become a humble nun, and, like a lowly maiden, associated with other daughters of Christ in providing the necessaries of life, and diligently attending to domestic offices. He advises her not to suppose, that by retiring from the world she is now safe in port, and free from all temptation; but that she must still carefully guard her own heart against the influence of earthly things⁴. In another long letter he addressed her as his beloved lady, the spouse of his *Lord*,

¹ Martene's *Thesaurus Anecd.*, vol. i., col. 373-4, from the archives of Marmoutier.

² A translation of this letter is printed in *Letters of Royal and Illustrious Ladies of Great Britain*, vol. i., p. 9.

³ John Hagulstadt, Twysden, p. 266.

⁴ Hildebert's *Letters*, book i., No. IV., col. 7-9.

alluding to her religious vocation¹. It is evident, from the tone of this epistle, that Adela's reflections on some parts of her past conduct had not been very satisfactory. A too great love for rule, and for the pleasures of this life, want of strict regard for truth, and love of flattery, weighed upon her conscience; and her spiritual adviser enters upon these points, and after shewing their evil tendency from Scripture, exhorts her to atone for them by true penitence,—an injunction with which she appears to have fully complied².

Of the private conventual life of the countess-nun few details are preserved, beyond the allusions to her humility, and diligence in fulfilling even the more menial offices of her situation, which have been already quoted. One incident however occurred in her convent, in which she was a party concerned, which affords a curious illustration of the prevailing superstition of the times. One of the nuns of Marcigny, Alberca by name, had a nocturnal vision, which greatly alarmed and perplexed her. She dreamed that Geoffry, the prior of the convent, lately deceased, appeared to her, and related that, on his recent departure from the body, his spirit was seized by an innumerable multitude of demons, who were dragging him away as their prey, when St. Bede came to his rescue; whereupon a long discussion took place between the good and bad angels in reference to the disposal of him. The chief sin which was found difficult to get over was that, in his early life, before he entered upon his monastic seclusion, he had been arbitrary and unjust in the exaction of unlawful

¹ Beaugendre oddly conjectures that this *lord* must be Elias, Lord of Maine, to whose temporal jurisdiction Hildebert belonged, and that the lady addressed must be Agnes, his countess, the initial A. only being given. The context, however, renders the sense clear. "*Sponsa Domini mei Domina mea est; vapularem sub Judice Christo nisi sponsam Christi zelarem, et in Christo et pro Christo. Iterum enim dico. Sponsa Domini Jesu Christi es.*"

² Hildebert's Letters, book i., No. vi., col. 11-16.

taxes; but the saint overruled this objection, on the convenient plea, that his assuming the cowl was a sufficient compensation for all his former crimes; and on this ground he at length was admitted into paradise. But even in the realms of bliss, he was troubled with the idea that his son Geoffry was pursuing the very course which had so nearly proved the cause of his own perdition; and he had therefore obtained permission to revisit the world, and to reveal these circumstances to Alberca, whom he solemnly charged to take care that his son might be informed of the danger threatening him. Why he should have chosen to make his revelation to another rather than the individual immediately concerned, he did not say; but this supernatural commission was the occasion of much terrified perplexity to the poor nun. In her distress, she had recourse to the Lady Adela, as the most illustrious of the sisterhood, and to her she repeated her wondrous tale. The countess received it with implicit eagerness, and immediately undertook the affair. She sought out young Geoffry, and solemnly interrogated him as to whether he still continued his unlawful practices. His surprise at such a challenge was very great, for the secret of these guilty deeds had been scrupulously kept by his father and himself, and he much marvelled how they could have been divulged. Whether he profited by the warning thus given, we are not informed. The whole tale, however, was carefully preserved by a monkish chronicler of the day, as affording indubitable testimony of the occurrence of supernatural dreams¹.

In the year 1135, on the death of her last surviving brother, Henry I., Peter, Abbot of Clugny, wrote her a letter, giving her all the particulars he could collect with reference to an event, which doubtless caused her sincere regret. It is as follows:—

¹ Petrus, Abbas Clun. de Miraculis, Bibl. Cluniac., col. 1289.

“To our venerable and dearest sister, the Lady Adela, Friar Peter, humble Abbot of Clugny, wishes health and every blessing from our Lord. If we have not yet sent to your grace concerning the death of our ever-beloved lord, the King of England, the cause was that, in so great grief, expedition is impossible; and we shrunk, not without cause, from being the first relaters of such a calamity. Yet if you would know all that we do, know that as yet we are informed of nothing, excepting that during eight days he was confined to bed in a certain town near Rouen, and that the Archbishop of Rouen was his assiduous attendant; and that, having received from him all the sacraments of the Church, he passed away from this life on the fourth nones of December, in deep penitence and confession of the faith. His body, as he had commanded, was brought to Rouen, and thence taken by his son Robert to England, to be interred at Reading. All Normandy is shaken with internal and external war. Of the state of the transmarine realm, we have heard nothing certain; for those who brought us the news had come in all haste from Normandy. But we have sent two couriers, one to my lord of Rouen, the other to my lord of Winchester, who will quickly inform us of whatever they hear from either party. We have appointed such services for the eternal welfare of the dead king as were never appointed by the Cluniac Order for any other. It were superfluous to tell you what you should do for him¹.”

The countess did not long survive her brother. She lived to witness the splendid destinies, though not the misfortunes of her third son, Stephen, whom, in 1114, she had sent a portionless youth to the court of his uncle, King Henry². He was treated with the most generous

¹ Ann. St. Bened., vol. vi., p. 260. Bouquet, vol. xv., p. 632. Duchesne, *Bibliotheca Cluniacensis*, col. 635-6. Henry I. had been an eminent benefactor of the Cluniac order.

² Peter of Blois, *Cont. Ing.*, Gale, vol. i., p. 121. Hearne's *William of Newbridge*, p. 27.

liberality by the king, who little dreamed that he was strengthening the future supplanter of his daughter's rights.

Of Henry, her youngest son, the talented but unprincipled and versatile bishop of Winchester, we shall have occasion afterwards to speak. He was early devoted by his mother to the church, "that she might not seem to have brought forth children for this world only¹," and he also owed his elevation to his uncle, who made him first abbot of Glastonbury, and then raised him to the episcopal see. He was a very learned prelate, and wrote several works both in prose and verse; one of the principal was a history of the discovery of the bones of the far-famed King Arthur at Glastonbury monastery, in which discovery he himself was a principal actor².

William, the eldest son, did not succeed his father in the earldom; through the influence of his mother, as already stated, his claims were set aside in favour of his younger brother. She has been reproached for an unnatural partiality on this account; but, from what has transpired relative to the character of William, it is evident that he was wholly unfit to rule. He was all but imbecile in mind, and not only weak but vicious. The only action of his life, of which we have any account, is an unsuccessful attempt he made, on some frivolous provocation, to murder Bishop Ivo and all the clergy of Chartres, while they were officiating in the church³. He offered no resistance to the deprivation of his birthright, but assumed the name and arms of his wife Agnes, the daughter and heiress of Giles de Sully, and became the founder of the great house of Sully Champagne⁴.

¹ Wm. of Newbridge, Hearne's edit., vol. i., p. 29.

² Ord. Vit., p. 692, Gul. Gemet., p. 582, Bouquet, vol. xii. Adam de Domerham, Hearne's edit., vol. ii., pp. 304 and 315. Godwin, de Præsulibus, p. 221.

³ Rer. Franc. Script. Ant., vol. iv., p. 232.

⁴ Ord. Vit., Bouquet, vol. xii., pp. 605, 692. L'Art de vérifier les Dates, vol. xi., pp. 362-3.

Theobald, the great earl of Blois, his mother's darling son, inherited his father's dominions, and was the progenitor of a long line of noble descendants. His only daughter Adela, named after her grandmother, became the second wife of Louis VII. of France, and the mother of his heir Philip Augustus, thus mingling the blood of the Conqueror of England with that of the Capetian dynasty in the veins of the most famous of their descendants¹.

Of Adela's remaining sons, Humbert died young, and Philip was educated for the Church, and became Bishop of Chalons². The name of Eudo once occurs in one of her charters³, and beyond this we have no information concerning him.

The destiny of her daughter Lucia, or Matilda, as she is variously called, was unfortunate. She was married to Ralph, Earl of Chester, a powerful English noble, and soon afterwards sailing from Normandy to England, in the fatal *Blanche Nef*, which bore the destinies of the heir of England, Prince William, only son of Henry I., she and her husband, with all that young and reckless band, found a watery grave⁴.

Her sister Adela was given in marriage by Earl Theobald to Milo de Brai, Lord of Montlheri and Viscount of Troyes, but Bishop Ivo, who really seems to have been the evil genius of all love-marriages, found or framed a plea of illegality in the union, and appealed to the Pope. In consequence of his relentless pertinacity, to the great grief of the bridegroom, the marriage was annulled⁵. Two other daughters of the countess are named—Alice, said to have been the wife of Reynald III., Earl of Joigni, and

¹ Bern. Guid., p. 232, Chron. Reg. Franc., p. 213, Bouquet, vol. xii.

² L'Art de Vérifier, vol. xi., p. 363.

³ Collection des Cartulaires de France, by Guerard, vol. ii., p. 455.

⁴ Ord. Vit., p. 734, Chron. St. Martin. Turon., p. 66, Bouquet, vol. xii.

⁵ Arch. Suger, Bouquet, vol. xii., pp. 36 and 41.

Eleanora, wife of Raoul, Earl of Vermandois, but they rest on uncertain authority¹.

The death of the Countess Adela took place in 1137, when she had attained to the advanced age of seventy-four or seventy-five years. Her remains were conveyed back to her native province of Caen, and deposited with those of her mother and her sister Cæcilia in the abbey of the Holy Trinity in that city, where the simple inscription of "Adela filia regis," "Adela, the daughter of the king," pointed out the burial-place of this last surviving child of William the Conqueror².

¹ L'Art de Vérifier, vol. xi. p. 362-3.

² Ord. Vit., Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 692. De la Rue, Essais sur la ville de Caen, vol. ii., p. 44. Gallia Christina, vol. xi., col. 434.

GUNDRED,

SUPPOSED DAUGHTER OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

CHAPTER III.

Omitted by ancient chroniclers—Doubtful descent—Active career of Earl Warren—His mature age—Gundred's marriage—Their pilgrimage—Entertained at Clugni—They found Clugniac Priory—Charters of foundation—Gundred's tranquil life—Household—Children—Death—Tomb discovered—Earl Warren's death.

THE name of Gundred is not given by any of our ancient historians, as a daughter of William the Conqueror; and Ordericus Vitalis, the only one who names her at all, speaks of her as a "sister of Gherbode the Fleming¹." The authority upon which she has been placed in the royal family of England is a charter of William the Conqueror to the monastery of St. Pancras, near Lewes, in Sussex, in which he bestows lands upon the monks, on condition of their praying for the souls of his ancestors and descendants, and also "for the soul of William, Earl of Warren, and of his wife Gundred, my daughter, and their heirs." But it is a curious fact, that the words "*filiae meæ*," in the original charter, which is in existence², are supplied in a comparatively modern hand,

¹ Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 587.

² Cotton. MS. Vespasian, f. iii. fol. 1.

the MS. being a good deal defaced. In no other deed does the king assert any relationship to Gundred; and although her husband, Earl Warren, frequently mentions King William in his charters with gratitude, as the founder of his fortunes, by bringing him into England, he claims no parentage with the monarch; nor do the descendants of Gundred, in their deeds of gifts, very many of the originals of which are still in existence, recognise their alliance with the royal family¹.

The negative evidence seems, therefore, strong that Gundred was not a daughter of the Conqueror, but, on the other hand, two distinct notices occur of her as the daughter of Queen Matilda. One of these is found in a deed of gift from Gundred's husband, Earl Warren, to Lewes Priory, which he says is granted "for the salvation of my soul, and for the soul of my lord King William, who brought me into England, and for the salvation of my lady Queen Matilda, the mother of my wife, &c."² Again, the manor of Carleton, in Norfolk, is recorded to have been given to the same priory by "Queen Matilda, mother of King Henry, and of the Countess Gundred³." The inscription on her tombstone, too, speaks of her as being of ducal, but not of regal descent⁴.

The supposition of her being the daughter of the queen, and not of the king, involves the dilemma of either casting a blight upon the fair fame of Matilda of Flanders, by imputing to her an illegitimate child, or supposing that she was a widow, and had children by a former husband

¹ Among the documents recently transferred from the Chapter-house, Westminster, to the Rolls-house, is a valuable volume, containing a large collection of the original charters of Lewes Priory, almost from its foundation. It includes many of William, the son of Gundred, but the volume is much spoiled by the want of chronological arrangement in the binding of the deeds. It is numbered B. v.

² *Monasticon Anglic.*, vol. v., p. 12, from the registry of the Priory of Lewes.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 14, from the account-book of Lewes Priory.

⁴ Watson's *Earls of Warren and Surrey*, vol. i., p. 60.

before her marriage with the Conqueror; and though either of these positions is fraught with objections, and would be difficult to prove, still the relationship of Gundred with the king seems harder still to bear out.

At the present day, however, Gundred is so universally admitted into the royal genealogy that, questionable as is her claim to such a rank, it cannot be out of place to give a brief record of her.

She must have been one of the family circle of Queen Matilda, and have thus accompanied her to England; that she was on terms of affectionate intimacy with the royal family is testified by their liberality towards her, not the least striking proof of which is afforded by the Conqueror's giving her in marriage to one of the first nobles in the land. William, Earl Warren, was related to the ducal house of Normandy by his descent from a sister of the Countess Gunnora, wife of Richard I., and was amongst the principal Normans who came over with the Conqueror at the battle of Hastings. He proved himself a worthy follower of his daring master, and was rewarded for his gallantry with large grants of land in eleven counties, but principally situated in Sussex¹. Here he built the baronial mansion of Castle Lewes, which long after continued to be the principal residence of his family².

The character of this nobleman, as gathered from the brief memorials handed down to us, stands in a more advantageous light than that of the generality of the fierce and reckless spirits of the times. His bravery has been already referred to; it will presently be seen that he was both liberal and devout, and he appears to have possessed considerable capacity for political affairs, since, in the year 1067, during the first absence of King William from England, he was associated with Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, and

¹ Ellis's Introduction to Domesday book, 8vo. edit., vol. i., p. 227.

² Dugdale's Baronage, vol. i., p. 73. Domesday-book, vol. ii., p. 163 b

Fitzosborne, in the government of the kingdom, and some years afterwards he and Richard de Bienfait were appointed justices of the whole realm. During the disturbances occasioned by the conspiracy of Ralph de Guader, these magistrates summoned several of the malcontents before them, and, on their refusing to appear, laid aside the magisterial robes, girded on the sword, and meeting the bold rebels in combat, put them to flight, and executed severe justice on every one whom they took prisoners, by cutting off their right foot¹.

It was probably in return for his services on this occasion, that the Conqueror bestowed upon him the hand of the Lady Gundred; for, although the date of the marriage is not mentioned, yet it certainly took place before the year 1078².

Almost immediately after their union, the earl and countess set out on a pilgrimage to St. Peter's at Rome; and in their passage through France and Burgundy, made a point of visiting all the monasteries in their route, to offer their orisons³.

At this time, the war that was raging between the ambitious pontiff Gregory VII. and the Emperor Henry IV., rendered it so unsafe for travellers to venture to Rome, that they were deterred from proceeding, and took up their abode for some time in the monastery of St. Peter's at Clugni, on the frontiers of Burgundy. Here they were most honourably received and entertained, both by the prior, (the abbot being absent,) and the whole convent, and were even admitted into the fraternity. The monks of the Clugniac order were a branch of the Benedictines, wearing the same habit, but more rigid in discipline. This order had been founded by one of the

¹ Ord. Vit., p. 594, Bouquet, vol. xii. Dugdale's Baronage, vol. i., p. 73.

² Dugdale's Monasticon, vol. v., p. 1. History of Lewes Priory.

³ Ibid.

abbots of this monastery, and named from the place where it was first instituted¹.

So strong was the impression produced on the mind of Earl Warren and his lady, by the kindness they met with, that they determined to found and endow a house of the same order for twelve monks; and the abbot of St. Peter's engaged to send over four of his fraternity to commence their establishment. On their return to England, they immediately set about their new foundation, which was built at Lewes in Sussex, the seat of the earl's principal possessions, and dedicated to St. Pancras. But the priory was completed before the foreign monks made their appearance, and Earl William, having sent in vain several messages to the procrastinating abbot of Clugni, went over with Gundred to Normandy, where King William was then holding his court, and they were about making arrangements to transfer their rich endowment from the ungrateful Cluniacs to the monastery of Tours, when the abbot hastened to Normandy, and seeing how matters stood, promised at once to send over the monks, who were duly established in their new abode, and extensive lands granted for their support². The foundation-charter of Earl Warren states, that these donations are made on condition that the monks should pray for his soul, for that of the Lady Gundreda his wife, and for the souls of King William and Queen Matilda.

The king himself bestowed on the monks of Lewes the manor of Walton, on condition of their offering up prayers "for the souls of my lord and predecessor King Edward, and for the souls of William de Warren, and his wife Gundred³."

¹ A description of the habits and customs of the Cluniacs, given in an epistolary form by two monks of the order, may be found in Acher's *Spicilegium*, vol. i., pp. 640-1.

² Dugdale's *Monasticon*, ut sup. Append. III. and IV.

³ Cotton. MS., Vespasian, F.iii., f.1. This is the *original* charter already referred to, and though brown with age, still remains tolerably legible,—a venerable relic of antiquity, bearing the *crosses* of the king and his sons.

Queen Matilda, with her usual pious liberality, contributed her share to this good work, by bestowing upon the earl and countess, with consent of her husband, the manor of Carleton, to aid in its endowment¹. Earl William then executed a formal settlement, by which his church of St. Pancras, with two hides of land settled upon it by himself, and one by his wife, "which she had formerly held in the land now called *Falamela*," were bestowed upon the abbey of Clugny. This was confirmed by King William, at the petition of the earl and countess, and sealed with the seals of the king, queen, Prince William, the Earl Warren, and several nobles, and lastly was affixed the seal of the Countess Gundred².

After his marriage, Earl William did not interfere much with public affairs, and this fact augurs well for his domestic happiness, and that of his wife. Their time seems to have been passed in the quiet seclusion of private life, on one of the earl's numerous estates. That he frequently visited his more remote possessions, is evident from a stipulation in one of his charters to his favourite monastery; he confers upon it a manor in Norfolk, with express reservation of two nights' entertainment for himself and suite once every year, on his journey to and from Yorkshire; but in case they remained longer than the said period, they were to pay all further expenses.

An entry in the Domesday book affords a curious insight into the almost princely scale on which the household of this great baron must have been formed. He had an annual income of 16,000 herrings from the burgesses of Lewes, and 4000 more from "Bristelmestone," now Brighton³. One is almost at a loss to imagine how he could dispose of such immense quantities of a food, which

¹ Dugdale's Monast., vol. v., p. 12. Cotton. MS., Vespasian, F. xv., f. 10 b.

² Cart. Eccles. Clun., Duchesne, Bibl. Clun., col. 532.

³ See Sir Henry Ellis's valuable Introduction to Domesday book, 8vo. edit., vol. i., p. 141.

now at least, is not much in vogue at the tables of the great. Nor do the well-known gastronomic capabilities of our Anglo-Norman ancestors afford any ground for the supposition that it was with such unsubstantial fare that their groaning boards were supplied. Doubtless the more important contents of the larder and butlery were on a similar scale; and busy as the thrifty dames of that age were in the personal superintendence of their domestic concerns, we may fancy that the office of the Lady Gundred was no sinecure.

During the nine years of her married life, Gundred became the mother of four children. William, who succeeded his father as Earl Warren and Surrey, and was the ancestor of many noble earls of that family; Reynald, the second son, espousing the cause of the unfortunate Robert Curthose, Duke of Normandy, was taken prisoner, but soon after liberated by his uncle King Henry, and died childless¹. The daughters were Edith², and another, whose name has not transpired³, both of whom were married.

The Countess Gundred was not long spared to fulfil a mother's duties to her infant family, for she died in child-bed on the 26th of May, 1085. It is probable her accouchement was somewhat premature, as it took place not in her own baronial hall, but at the priory of Castle Acre in Norfolk, endowed by her husband and herself, as an appendage to their monastery of St. Pancras, Lewes⁴.

Her remains were conveyed by her sorrowing spouse to the chapter-house of Lewes, and there interred. The earl bestowed upon the monks the manor of Hecham, in Norfolk, in order to secure their prayers for the soul of his beloved and lamented wife⁵.

¹ Ord. Vit., pp. 699, 700.

² Gul. Gemet., Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 572.

³ Ord. Vit., Ibid., pp. 605, 612. A genealogist of comparatively modern date calls her Gundred.—Harl. MS., 6148, fol. 6 b.

⁴ Register, Lewes. Dugdale, vol. i., p. 74.

⁵ Dugdale's Baronage, vol. i., p. 74. Monasticon, ut sup.

Many years ago the tomb of the Lady Gundred was discovered in Isfield Church, Sussex, annexed to the monument of one of the Shirley family. It is supposed to have been conveyed there on the dissolution of Lewes Priory, by one of the Warren family, who wished to spare it the usual fate of such monumental relics: there it lay half buried in an old wall, and covered with dust and mortar, until, after the lapse of several centuries, it was again brought to light. Her tomb had been richly ornamented in the Norman fashion; and at the time it was discovered, the inscription on the stone was still partially legible, in characters the antiquity of which, as well as the quaint grotesqueness of the richly sculptured heads, prove that this must have been the original tombstone. As far as the words can be deciphered or supplied with any degree of certainty, her epitaph was as follows:—"Gundred, of ducal origin, the glory of her age, a noble sprout, introduced the balsam of good manners into the churches of England. She was a Martha to the poor, and a Mary in piety; the part of Martha is dead, but the noble part of Mary survives. O holy Pancras, witness of her piety and equity, she made thee her heir; do thou, clement one, receive thy mother. On the sixth kalends of June, the struggling spirit burst the alabaster of the flesh¹."

Sir William Burrell, the Sussex antiquarian, re-erected the stone in the vestry pew of St. John's church, South-over, where it now remains. A mural tablet, bearing the following inscription, is placed above the tomb:—"Within this pew stands the tombstone of Gundred, daughter of William the Conqueror, and wife of William, the first Earl Warren, which, having been deposited over her remains in the chapter-house of Lewes Priory, and lately discovered in Isfield church, was removed to this place at the expense of William Burrell, Esq., A.D. 1775²."

¹ Watson's Earls of Warren and Surrey, vol. i., p. 60.

² Sir Wm. Burrell's MS. collections for the History of Lewes, Sussex. Donation MS., No. 5698, ff. 298 b. 299.

After the early death of the Countess, Earl Warren did not marry again, and several of his charters to his favourite monastery, in which her name is mentioned, bear witness to the deep and sincere affection with which her memory was cherished. Early in the reign of William Rufus, he was created Earl of Surrey¹; but did not long enjoy his new honours. He died on the 24th of June, 1089, having survived his beloved wife only four years; and at his special request, was interred by her side in the priory of Lewes. A laudatory epitaph to his memory is still preserved².

One of the Harleian manuscripts³ contains curious drawings of William and Matilda, with their three sons, Robert, William, and Henry, and their so-called daughters, Adela, Gundred, and Constance. The princesses each wear the coronet of a countess, with a long veil of gold tissue flowing on their shoulders; they are robed in mantles, one half of which is of regal purple, with the coat of arms of King William embroidered on it; the other half wrought with the arms of their husbands. That of Gundred, checky or and azure; and of Constance, ermine; whilst Adela's is left blank, probably because the limner was ignorant of the coat-of-arms of the Earls of Blois.

¹ Ord. Vit., Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 635.

² Register of Lewes, quoted in Dugdale's Baronage, vol. i., p. 74. A curious legend is preserved in the register of Ely Church, in the Bodleian Library. It states that Earl William, shortly before his death, had wrongfully deprived that church of some lands. Not long after, as the worthy abbot of Ely was one night lying quietly on his bed, and musing on heavenly things, he was disturbed by a sudden rushing in the air, and the well-known voice of the earl was heard in a wild shriek, calling out, "Lord, have mercy on me!" as his spirit was hurried away by his fiendish tormentors. A few days afterwards, the awe-struck monks received the news of his death, with the sum of one hundred shillings from his widow, and a request that prayers might be offered for his soul. Dugdale, who quotes this tale, adds, "If the first part of this story be no truer than the last, I shall deem it a mere fiction, in regard that the lady was certainly dead more than three years before."—Baronage, p. 74.

³ No. 1449, fol. 6 b.

These sketches are too rude however to deserve the name of portraits, and the costume is not to be depended upon, since they were executed in the early part of the reign of Henry VIII., as appears from the style of the handwriting in the superscriptions. They are principally valuable from their authenticating the fact, that in the time of Henry VIII., Gundred was acknowledged as one of the daughters of William the Conqueror.

MATILDA,

DAUGHTER OF HENRY I.

CHAPTER I.

Matilda's ancestry—Her birth and education—Demanded in marriage by the Emperor Henry V.—Preparations for her journey—Ceremonies of her betrothal and coronation—German education—Marriage—Sketch of the life of Henry V.—His rebellion against his father—Quarrels with the Pope—Coronation at Rome—Slight mention of Matilda by the German chroniclers—Frequent absence of her husband—Her prudent conduct—Henry's excommunication—Absolution—Declining health—Reputed death and funeral—Rumours concerning him—Matilda returns to Normandy—Her hand solicited by German princes, but refused—Arrives in England—Receives homage of the nobles—Asked in marriage by Geoffry of Anjou—Matilda's aversion—Dignity of the House of Anjou—Matilda sent to Normandy—Knighting of Geoffry—Marriage ceremonies—Geoffry's character—Matrimonial quarrels—Matilda divorced—Returns to England—Renewed homage—Reconciliation with Geoffry—Birth of Prince Henry—General joy—The king comes to Normandy—Quarrels between him and Geoffry—Birth of the younger Geoffry—Illness of Matilda—Her liberal benefactions—Quarrels with her father—Return to Anjou—King Henry's death.

MATILDA, the only daughter of Henry I., and Matilda the Atheling, is the first descendant of our Anglo-Norman sovereigns, who is, strictly speaking, entitled to the name of an *English* princess; and the position which she occupies in the royalty of England is a peculiar and most important one. Born in England, blending in her veins the Norman blood with that of the race of Saxon monarchs

so long and so justly venerated, she was the foundress of a dynasty which swayed the English sceptre for upwards of three centuries, and under whose energetic rule this country was raised to its highest pitch of martial glory: and although the name of Plantagenet has long since been superseded, yet through the Plantagenet queen of Henry VII., her *direct* lineal descendant still graces the throne of these realms, in the person of her present Majesty. In Matilda, too, the right of female succession to the English crown was first distinctly acknowledged,—an important point, when it is remembered how many of the continental princes could transmit their dominions through their male descendants *only*. Though it may be argued that she never was the settled and undisputed sovereign of England, still the point was gained, when, thrice during the life-time of her father, the assembled barons swore fealty to her as his heiress; and it is to the enterprising ambition of her rival, and still more to her own unyielding haughtiness of character, rather than to any real or even pretended invalidity in her claim, that we must attribute her failure in establishing her title.

Many events in the life of Matilda are so immediately interwoven with the history of the times in which she lived, that she is perhaps more familiar to the general reader, than any other English princess. In giving a personal memoir of this lady, we shall follow the plan we have laid down for ourselves, by endeavouring to avoid as far as possible, the beaten track of general history, inserting only what is absolutely necessary to a clear comprehension of the whole; but giving prominence to such particulars as directly concern Matilda herself.

The Princess Matilda was born, according to Gervase of Canterbury¹, in the second year of her father's reign, that is in 1102, and as he, along with Gulielmus Gemeticensis²,

¹ See Twysden, col. 1338.

² Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 573.

Benoit¹, and other early historians, agree in asserting that she was the eldest child of King Henry, this date must be correct, since we find, from the troubadour-poet Wace, that her mother Queen Matilda's first confinement took place at Winchester, in the autumn of that year, when Duke Robert of Normandy, landing to assert his just claim to the English crown, refused, with his characteristic gallantry, to attack a woman in child-bed, and left the queen and infant heiress of England in peace².

The name by which this Princess is distinguished in the Saxon annals, and which she probably received at the font, is the Saxon one of Ethelice or Adelais³; but that generally given to her in other chronicles, is Matilda, with its divers corruptions or abbreviations, Molde, Mawd, or Maude, though Simeon of Durham, John Hagulstadt, and some few others still fondly adhered to the more familiar and less foreign name of Adelais or Adela.

As soon as the young Matilda was emancipated from the nursery, she, along with her brother William, was placed under the care of Anselm, the learned and pious Archbishop of Canterbury, who was a special favourite with the queen⁴, and under whose watchful and judicious surveillance, the royal children passed their early years. This fact is proved from a letter of King Henry to the archbishop, written during one of his continental journeys, in which he earnestly exhorts him still to maintain his paternal guardianship over his children⁵. The princess

¹ After having spoken of Matilda, he alludes to William, as "*Li suens frères, après lui nez.*"—Harl. MS., 1707, fol. 248 b., col. 2.

² Roman de Rou, vol. ii., p. 357.

³ Saxon Annals, p. 230. Lingard's History of England, 4th edit., vol. i., p. 514, note 39.

⁴ Several letters, written by Matilda of Scotland to Anselm, are still existing, in which she addresses him as her "lord and dearest father;" and the warm interest she took in bringing about his return to England, and his reconciliation with her spouse, prove that her affection did not evaporate in mere words.—Anselm's Letters, book iii., Nos. 55, 93, 96, 119; book iv., Nos. 74, 78.

⁵ Bouquet, vol. xv., p. 68.

soon imbibed a warm attachment for her venerable tutor¹, and the influence he acquired over her would probably have had a permanently beneficial influence on her character; but the education of Matilda could scarcely be said to have commenced, before her destiny underwent a material change. She had only just attained her seventh year, when a stately embassy arrived from Henry V., Emperor of Germany, a monarch old enough to be her father, to demand her in marriage. If the importance attached by the emperor to the success of his request is to be estimated by the number and quality of the messengers employed, he certainly rated it very highly; for his ambassadors excited the surprised admiration of the chroniclers of the time². Benoit speaks of them as "high men, earls and barons, noble and of wise eloquence, and of very profound learning³;" while Peter of Blois tells us they were "lofty in stature, eminent for learning, noble in dignity, and powerful in wealth." Henry I. received them in one of the most splendid courts he ever held; and having heard their message, he, in a large assembly of barons, required them to swear, as proxies for the Emperor, that the marriage should take place, and then promised in due time to send over the young princess⁴. Whether the German nobles were allowed to pay their homage to their future empress before their return, we are not informed; but after their departure, Henry, flattered by the proposed alliance, began forthwith to make preparations for its completion, in a manner suited to the dignity of the contracting parties. In order to obtain means for equipping his daughter, he levied the enormous tax of three shillings upon every hide of land in England⁵; and in the following year, the little

¹ Hearne's William of Newbridge, *Notæ et Spicilegium*, p. 639.

² *Annals Waverly*, Gale, vol. ii., p. 145.

³ F. 288 b., col. 1, Harl. MS., 1717.

⁴ *Petri Blesensis Cont. Ingulph*, Gale, vol. i., p. 128.

⁵ *Paris*, vol. ii., p. 64. Some say two shillings. *Stevens' Historical Account of Taxes*, p. 17.

lady, glittering with innumerable jewels, and amply endowed with splendid gifts, bearing in her train a dowry of 10,000 marks of silver, was committed to the care of Roger Fitz Richard, a trusty baron, who, with a noble train of knights, accompanied her to Germany¹.

On approaching the confines of the empire, she was everywhere received with due magnificence. At Utrecht she was met by her future lord; and during the approaching festival of Easter, the nuptial solemnities, or rather those of the betrothal, were performed. We do not learn how the juvenile bride, who was said to be "very wise and valiant, and beautiful²," was taught to play her part in these royal pageants; but on her coronation, which took place almost immediately after at Mayence, the Archbishop of Treves, "reverently" held the child in his arms, while the Archbishop of Cologne, surrounded by all the dignitaries of the empire, placed upon her brow the imperial diadem of the Cæsars³.

The emperor settled upon her a most munificent dowry⁴, and commanded that she should be carefully educated. He also expressed a wish that his future consort should, as much as possible, learn to habituate herself in every thing to German habits and customs;—no very difficult task for a child of eight years old⁵, whose manners must have been as yet unformed; and the partiality Matilda ever afterwards evinced for her adopted country proved

¹ Saxon Annals, p. 215. Paris, ut sup.

² "Qui mult fu sage e prox e belle." Benoit, f. 242 b., col. 1.

³ Gul. Gemeticensis, p. 793, Ord. Vit., pp. 664 and 708, Bouquet, vol. xii. Ben., f. 248 b., col. 2.

⁴ Annalista Saxo, Echard., vol. i., col. 631, Gesta Paschalis II., Bouquet, vol. xv., p. 7. Annales Hildesheim, Leibnitz, vol. i., p. 738. Alber. Trium Fontium, Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 690.

⁵ Several of our early historians represent Matilda as being scarcely five years old at the time of her coronation in 1110; but the author of the Chroniques de Cambrai, in Bouquet, vol. xix., p. 400, and other foreign writers, place her age at eight years, which coincides with the date we have assigned to her birth, and is more consistent with the course of her future history.

that his injunctions were well fulfilled. In order the better to secure this object, Henry dismissed all her suite, to the no small disappointment of the ambitious nobles, who had hoped to obtain permanent appointments for themselves near the person of the young empress¹.

The provision made by the emperor for the household of Matilda, was on a scale corresponding to her dignity; "for," says our troubadour chronicler, "it was his desire that she should be nobly brought up and honourably served, and that she should learn German, and the customs and laws, and all that pertains to an empress, now in the time of her youth²." It would appear that her progress was satisfactory to her lord, who certainly was old enough to judge; for, in the year 1114, young as she was, he chose to consider her education as completed. A splendid court was assembled at Mayence, to which all the nobility of the empire crowded; and on the 7th of January, their nuptials were again celebrated. The ceremony of coronation was also repeated, after which Matilda was removed from her tutelage, and took up her residence with her imperial spouse³.

Henry's personal appearance, as depicted in his seal, is juvenile, and somewhat pleasing. He is represented as a beardless youth, dressed in an elegant tunic reaching to the ankles, over which is thrown the imperial mantle; he bears in his right hand the sceptre crowned with lilies, and

¹ Ord. Vit., ut supra.

² "Dilloc reine empereiz
Vout l'emperres sis marris
Q u'en fust norri noblement
E servé mult hautement
E qu'ele appriest li tieis (*tiesche*)
E les coutumes e les leis,
Les murs qui a ce apartiennent
E qui a empereiz convienent
De si au tems de son jovent."—Ben., f. 248 b., col. 2.

³ Dodechinus' Cont. Marianus Scotus, Pistorius' Rer. Germ. Script. Ant., vol. i., p. 670. S. Dunelm., p. 236, and Brompton, p. 1005, Twysden. Annalista Saxo, p. 714. Alberic Mon. Trium Fontium, p. 691, Bouquet, vol. xiii.

in his left the orb, surmounted by a cross¹. The impression from which the engraving here described, is taken, is from a deed bearing date 1112; but probably the seal itself might have been cast somewhat earlier.

It was in stormy and troublous times that the young English maiden became a sharer of the throne of the Kaisers; and it was probably thus, amidst the scenes of deadly feud and untiring animosity constantly passing around her, that her temper assumed that strength and firmness which ever afterwards characterized it². Even at the festivities of the court which was assembled to honour her marriage, and at which a large concourse of nobles and all the chivalry of the empire were present, Lothaire, Duke of Saxony, who had fallen into disgrace with the Emperor, was compelled to walk before him barefoot, and clad in a woollen tunic, none daring to regard him with favour—at least openly—though privately formidable conspiracies were entered into against Henry³.

Without entering at large into the intricate maze of German politics, a brief and rapid outline of the principal events of the previous life of Henry V. seems indispensable here. His public career commenced in the perpetration of a series of enormities, veiled under the semblance of religion, the consequences of which, and it is said the recollection too, ever haunted his after-life. The question of the right of ecclesiastical investiture, which at different periods was the subject of the most furious contests between the see of Rome and almost every crowned head in Europe, was agitated at the commencement of the twelfth century with fearful violence, between his father Henry IV. and Pope Gregory VII.; and the result of the con-

¹ Heineccius de Veteribus Sigillis, vol. i., p. 99.

² Raumer's Geschichte der Hohenstaufen, vol. i., p. 282.

³ Chron. Otho of Frisingen, Urstisius, p. 414. Chron. Elwangense, Freher, vol. i., p. 676. Gottfrid Viterbe Chron. Pistorius, vol. ii. p. 345.

test was that, on the Emperor's refusing to yield the point, the thunders of the Vatican were repeatedly hurled against him, and he was more than once solemnly excommunicated. In these circumstances, his unnatural son lifted up the sword against him, only too successfully; for the Emperor, unsuspecting of such treachery, was taken prisoner, and after a vain struggle, being forced to abdicate the throne, was placed in rigorous captivity¹. A touching letter from Henry IV. to his son still exists², in which he sorrowfully reproaches him for the cruelty of his conduct, in delivering him into the hands of his bitterest enemies, depriving him of all his household, and even taking away the lance and cross, the last relics of imperial dignity³; and concludes with an almost prophetic denunciation of the justice of that God whose judgments are a great deep, and who, notwithstanding his son's present exultation over his misery, will surely look down and judge between them. The degraded Emperor did not long survive his misfortunes; he died soon after at Liege, having been reduced by famine to such extremities, that he ate the leather of his boots for hunger⁴. He sent his ring and sword as his last token of forgiveness to his rebel son, with the simple but touching message,—“If thou hadst left me more, I would have sent more to thee⁵.” In spite of the ban of the Church, which was still in force against him, the inhabitants of Liege could not so far

¹ Kohlrausch's *Deutsche Geschichte*, p. 219.

² Reuber's *Rer. Germ. Script. Ant.*, pp. 279-80; also in the *Life of Henry IV.*, by J. Thurmaier, published by the Academy of Augsburg in 1518.

³ The imperial ensigns used in the coronation were, the holy cross, the sword, the sacred lance, the sceptre, orb, crown and diadem; and these were usually carried about with the emperor wherever he went. For a curious dissertation on the meaning of these symbols, see a poem by Gottfrid Viterbe in Pistorius, pp. 365-7.

⁴ Anon. *Chron.*, Reuber, p. 273.

⁵ *Compil. Chron.*, apud Leibnitz, vol. ii., p. 65. For many interesting details of the death of Henry IV., see *Chron. Slavorum*, Leibnitz, vol. ii., p. 566.

forget the respect due to his dignity, as to withhold from their deceased Emperor the rites of Christian burial; but as though not even the grave itself could appease the unnatural hatred of his son, Henry V. commanded his body to be disinterred; and after being irreverently exposed for some time, it was at length inclosed in a coffin and taken to Spire, where it was deposited, unburied and neglected, in the small and solitary church of St. Aphra¹, until the year 1111, when the excommunication being removed, it was at length interred at Spire². Although Henry V. had pleaded motives of religion, as the reason of the course he had adopted, yet it soon appeared how utterly fallacious was this pretext; for, with the imperial dignity, he assumed precisely the same political position with reference to the Romish see, on pretext of which he had caused his father so many troubles, and he proved a far more active and energetic adversary than Henry IV. had been.

A short time after the arrival of Matilda in Germany, he went to Rome, to compel the Pope, at the sword's point, to bestow upon him the crown; for although he had conferred the diadem upon his juvenile consort, yet as the emperors were accustomed themselves to receive it from the hands of the Pope, and as Paschal II. still insisted upon the rights of investiture being ceded, a point Henry firmly refused to yield, the iron crown of the Cæsars had never yet encircled his brow. He won his object at last; for the Pope, after enduring a captivity of sixty-one days, yielded, and on the 13th of April, 1111, he was solemnly crowned in the cathedral of St. Peter's³.

None of the German historians tell us whether Matilda was crowned at this time along with her august lord;

¹ Dodechin., p. 667, Germ. Chron., Pist., vol. i., p. 757. Gottfrid Viterbe, p. 344.

² Kohlrausch, p. 220.

³ Kohlrausch's Deutsche Geschichte, p. 222. German Chron., p. 759. Murri, Dissertatio de Coronâ Ferreâ, p. 48.

but as Gulielmus Gemeticensis alludes to "the imperial diadem having been placed on her head once and again in the Romulean city by the hands of the holy pontiff¹," it seems likely that, notwithstanding her youth, she was sent for to share in the solemn ceremonies, but would probably return immediately to the tutelage so much better befitting her years.

The advantage thus recently and forcibly gained by the Emperor was not likely to prove permanent, when the strong arm that obtained it was withdrawn; and accordingly the long and tedious disputes about the investitures were soon renewed, and continued for several years. Affairs were in this position when the youthful empress, emancipated from the care of her tutors and guardians, was called upon to participate in the toils and cares of her imperial spouse.

In perusing the German chroniclers, both of earlier and later date, we perceive a marked difference between their writings and those of the contemporary French and English historians. In the subjects of an elective monarchy, there is an utter absence of that chivalrous loyalty which leads those who live under an hereditary government, to regard with feelings of reverent devotion, and to recount with minute earnestness any circumstances connected with the reigning family. On this account, though everything associated with the leading events of German history is preserved with true nationality of spirit by their chroniclers, we look in vain among their voluminous pages for those domestic details to which the historical biographer is so greatly indebted; and during the fifteen years of her residence in Germany, the name of the Empress Matilda is very rarely mentioned. It does not seem probable that she enjoyed much of the society of her husband, excepting during the occasional periods when a brief respite from

¹ Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 579.

trouble was allowed him, and they celebrated together the festivals of the Church. Whether these frequent separations were subject of regret to Matilda we are not informed; that she was strongly attached to Germany is well known; but whether it was the toil-worn and conscience-stricken Emperor himself, or the homage and splendours connected with her position as his wife, that secured her regard, is, to say the least, very doubtful.

Henry's character, as preserved by the contemporary chroniclers, does not appear particularly calculated to win the love of a young and high-spirited girl; for although he was bold, enterprising, and clear-sighted, he is said to have been of caustic temper, grasping, ambitious, severe, and often cruel¹, and the remorse which incessantly preyed upon his mind for the part he had acted towards his murdered father rendered him but a gloomy and morose companion². One of the German chroniclers says that he ill-treated his wife³, but this was probably only during some temporary ebullition of passion. His frequent absences were perhaps rather a relief than otherwise to her, though her behaviour towards him was always characterized by a prudence and grace, which won for her the love and admiration of the nobles⁴, and the appellation of "*die gute Mecthilt*," or the good Matilda⁵.

¹ "He ne besorgede des Riches recht ne vele; he was bitteres sinnes, stark unde kune, he hadde oc vile scattes gesamenet, also dar geschreven is, ne starf sunder kindere unde ne wuste wane he dat samnede." Chron. Luneberg, Echard, vol. i., p. 137. The German student will at once perceive in this extract from one of the most ancient vernacular chronicles extant, the much closer resemblance which then subsisted between the German and English languages; just as in the Saxon forms adopted by our most ancient English writers, we trace a strong resemblance to the German; the two dialects tending thus in their earlier stages, mutually to elucidate and illustrate each other, and testifying their common origin.

² Heinrich, Geschichte des Teutschen reichs, vol. i., p. 203.

³ Chron. Repkar., Menckenius, Rer. Germ. Script. Ant., vol. iii., col. 3560.

⁴ Gul. Gemet., Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 577.

⁵ Chron. Repkar., Menck., ut sup.

The Christmas following the marriage of Henry and Matilda was celebrated at Goslar, and afterwards the Emperor set out on a short expedition against the Saxons, who were in a state of rebellion, in which he was worsted. He soon rejoined the empress at Mayence, there to solemnise the feast of Passover¹. In the meantime preparations were making for an expedition to Italy; the Christmas festival of 1115 was kept at Spire, and Henry gratified his young wife by confirming, at her request, divers possessions to the monks of St. Vitalis at Ravenna². Soon afterwards he set forth on his journey southward. It is uncertain whether the empress accompanied him, but if not, she joined him during the following year, for in 1117, she shared the honours of his second coronation, which took place at St. Peter's. The Pope Paschal, however, whom he had tried to supersede by the Anti-pope Gregory VIII.³, refused to officiate on this occasion, and the ceremony was performed by Maurice, Archbishop of Prague. During her residence in the imperial city, she received a visit from Ralph, Archbishop of Canterbury, who happened to be there at the time, and at the invitation of the emperor, paid her a visit of more than a week⁴. About this time the emperor, in compliance with her wishes, raised Henry, archdeacon of Winchester, who had accompanied the Empress to Germany, and apparently been permitted to remain there, to the bishopric of Virdun⁵.

Disturbances soon after this began to thicken in Rome. Upon the death of Pope Paschal, in 1118, the emperor endeavoured to support the claims of Gregory VIII.,

¹ Dodechin., p. 670.

² Mittarelli, *Monum. Favent. ad Script. Ital. Murat. Accessiones*, p. 415.

³ Hansigius, *Germania Sacra*, vol. ii., p. 215.

⁴ Muratori, *Annali d'Italia*, vol. vi., p. 386. Noris, *Istoria delle Investiture Ecclesiastiche*. Gul. Gemet., *Bouquet*, vol. xii., p. 306.

⁵ Alber. *Trium Fontium*, p. 692. Laurent, *Hist. Episcop. Virdun*, p. 634, *Bouquet*, vol. xiii.

the anti-pope, against Gelasius II., who was ultimately the successful candidate, and who revenged himself by thundering anathemas and excommunications against Henry¹. Matilda escaped, however, any personal participation in these stormy scenes, having been previously sent back into Germany for the sake of greater security. During the absence of her husband, she seems to have been invested with a sort of vice-regal authority in ecclesiastical matters, for in the following year an appeal was made to her by a certain monk, Witto, at the command of his abbot, against a bishop who had molested the goods of his monastery. The empress assembled a council, consisting of the Archbishop of Ravenna, the Imperial Chancellor, and other nobles, and in their presence forbade any person, under severe penalties, to disturb the monk Witto in his monastery, and commanded an Earl Boniface, then present, to reconcile the contending parties. This scene took place November 4th, 1118².

Matilda, in after life, showed herself such a dutiful daughter of the Church, that we cannot but suppose the sentence of excommunication fulminated against her husband to have caused her considerable uneasiness. On his return home, the nobles now ceased to flock as before to his court, and the Christmas of 1119, which was celebrated at Worms, bore scarcely any resemblance in splendour to those which had preceded it³. But both parties began to be weary of their long strife; probably Matilda exerted her influence over her lord to induce him to moderate somewhat of his pretensions. The Pope consented to do the same, and the long-disputed question of investiture was at length amicably settled, the emperor yielding his rights, on condition that the elections should only take place in presence of himself, or his plenipoten-

¹ Dodechin., p. 670. Annalista Saxo, Echard, vol. i., col. 641.

² Mittarelli, Annales Camaldunenses, vol. iii., p. 178.

³ Annal. Saxo., col. 643.

tiaries, and that in all doubtful cases he should have the casting vote; while the endowment of the temporal property connected with ecclesiastical office was still to be granted, as formerly, by the touch of the imperial sceptre¹.

The joy that pervaded all classes when, in a grand council held at Worms, this knotty point was finally settled, and the sentence of excommunication repealed, was unbounded. Henry and Matilda largely participated in it, and for a short season something like repose was granted to the harassed monarch. Matilda availed herself of this interval to found and endow the Benedictine abbeys of Oestbrock and Vrouwen Clooster, in which good deeds she was assisted by Godebold, bishop of Utrecht, and two knights of her own household². But this tranquillity did not long last, and the emperor was again obliged to prepare for the theatre of war. Meanwhile his health and spirits were alike failing; a painful hereditary disease was preying upon his constitution, and recollections of the past were ever busy within. His sorrows were increased by the fact, that he had no son through whom he could hope to perpetuate the honours of his house, and he looked forward to the time when the imperial crown should pass to another dynasty. This circumstance is carefully noted by the chroniclers of the day as a just retribution for his own undutiful conduct³.

On the last journey of Henry to Lombardy, to settle the troubles ceaselessly occurring in Italy, he was accompanied by Matilda, but their absence was not of long duration.

The Christmas of the year 1124 they celebrated at

¹ Kohlrausch, p. 222. Gottfrid Viterbe, *Pist.*, vol. ii., p. 345. Dumont, *Corps Diplom.*, vol. i., pt. i., p. 66.

² Beka, *Chron. de Epist. Ultraj.*, p. 46, note *a*.

³ *Ord. Vit.*, p. 666, Bouquet, vol. xii. *Mag. Chron. Belg.*, Pistorius vol. ii., p. 169. *Herm. Corn.*, Echard, vol. ii., p. 668.

Strasburg¹, after which the emperor was recommended to try the waters of Liege for the benefit of his health², but this place, the scene of the captivity and death of his departed sire, was not likely to exercise any beneficial influence upon the unhappy monarch, and after there commemorating the feast of Easter, he removed to Utrecht, still accompanied by the empress, who, during the last troublous scenes of his stormy career, was his constant attendant.

One of the last public documents of the Emperor Henry was a charter, dated on the 7th of May, 1124, by which he confers large grants of land, &c., on Berengazus, the abbot of St. Maximin, which he says are given "at the intercession of our dearest wife Matilda." The workings of a troubled conscience may be traced in almost every line of this singular document; he expresses his fixed resolution to restore to the holy church everything which had at any time been taken away through his means, adding, "We promise to do all this, but if it should so happen that we depart this life *suddenly*, we strictly enjoin upon our successor, and all Christian princes, to fulfil our vow³."

During his illness at Utrecht, Henry V. was attended by several nobles, and among others by Duke Frederic of Swabia. Feeling his strength rapidly declining, the dying monarch summoned this nobleman into his presence, and, after making some state arrangements, and consulting on the affairs of the kingdom, he gave the imperial insignia into his charge, and that of the empress, ordering them to be conveyed to the stronghold of Hamerstein, until the election of his successor⁴, and finished his testamentary

¹ Annalista Saxo, Echard, vol. ii., col. 655.

² Robertus de Monte, Appendix to Sigebert¹ Gemblacensis, p. 872, Anselm. Gemb., p. 949, Pistorius, vol. i.

³ Martène's Collect. amplissima, vol. i., col. 685-7.

⁴ Some historians say that he bequeathed them to Matilda, and that they were afterwards fraudulently obtained from her by the Archbishop of Mayence.

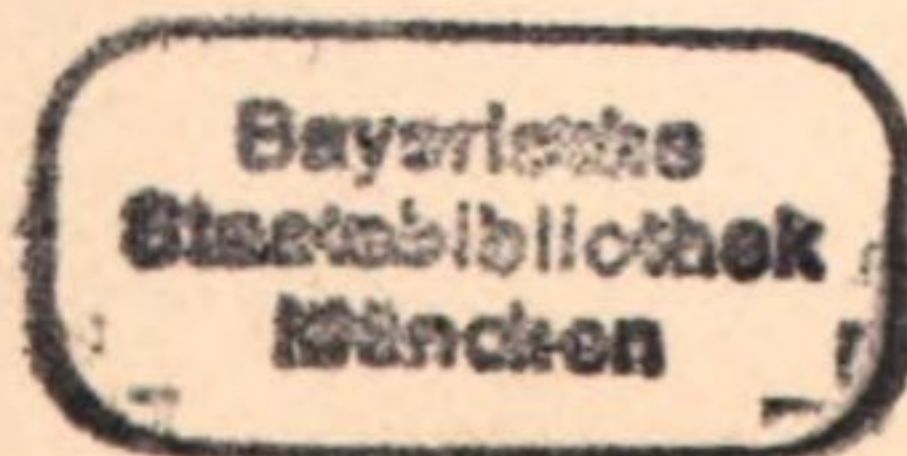
dispositions, by committing the young empress to the care of his noble relative. His death is reported to have taken place almost immediately after, on the 22nd of May, 1125, in the forty-fourth year of his age; and the same month solemn funeral obsequies were performed for him at Spire, when his coffin was placed among those of his ancestors, in the cathedral of that ancient city¹.

Yet, notwithstanding the pomp with which this imperial funeral was attended, strange tales were rumoured, which, if they be true, appear to cast some light on the extreme unwillingness afterwards manifested by Matilda to leave Germany, and also on her strong aversion to a second marriage. It is said that, ever haunted by the spectres of the past, stung by remorse for his inhuman treatment of his father, and for the harshness which he had exercised towards the holy pontiff, Henry resolved to abandon his throne, and devote himself to a life of penitence and humiliation, and that he secretly took his departure from his imperial abode, never to enter it again. A French chronicler's account is as follows:—"The Emperor Henry of Germany, who had married Matilda, daughter of Henry, King of England, left Germany, and it was not known what became of him, and he never returned again²;" but others add that he undertook many a long and weary pilgrimage, and at length, bowed down by years and so changed that it was scarcely possible he should be recognized, retired to end his days in a Cluniac monastery. Robert de Monte³ is one of the earliest chroniclers who repeats this wild story, though with some incredulity, but assuring us that at Clugny "there was indeed a certain monk very like him, who constantly asserted that

¹ Chron. Herman Corner, in Echard, vol. ii., col. 668. Germ. Chron., Pistorius, vol. i., p. 762. Annalista Saxo, col. 656-7. Otto de Gestis Fred. I. Imp., ap. Urstisius, p. 415. Chronica Australis, Freher, vol. i., p. 444. Rob. de Monte, Pistor., p. 872.

² Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 253 B.

³ Pistorius, vol. i., pp. 872, 877.



he was the Emperor." Guillaume de Nangis, who gives Anjou as the place of his retirement, adds that before his death, having revealed his name and rank at confessional, the information was given to Matilda, who visited and recognized her dying lord¹. Another historian asserts that at his disappearance, she was "sad even to death, and not knowing whither he had gone²."

Strange as this tale appears, it commanded extensive belief among those who were most likely to be familiar with the emperor's person. Richard of Poitou³ informs us that, in Italy, where this mysterious monk travelled, he was firmly believed to be the Emperor, and that he had spoken of many things which it was utterly impossible that any one but the Emperor should be able to repeat. Knighton⁴, Brompton⁵, and others of our English writers, profess their belief in the fact, but, with less probability, place the asylum of the conscience-stricken exile at West Chester, in England, where, they tell us, he led a hermit's life, assuming the name of Godescall, or the Called of God⁶; but the truth of a circumstance which, if it did occur, must necessarily have been involved in the strictest secrecy, cannot now be distinctly ascertained.

During the long absence of Matilda from her native land, changes had taken place there which had materially altered her position. The death of her only brother William had rendered her the heiress-presumptive of England and Normandy, and as such, her father was naturally anxious for her immediate return to her ancestral dominions, as soon as the death of the Emperor

¹ Bouquet, vol. xv., p. 728. Bourdigné, Chron. d'Anjou, edit. 1842, vol. i., p. 298.

² Cotton. MS., Claudius, D. VI., f. 19 b., col. 2.

³ Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 414.

⁴ Col. 2382, Twysden.

⁵ Col. 1015, *ibid.*

⁶ See also Harl. MS., No. 685, f. 127 b.; Hearne's edit. of Sprott's Chron., p. 117; and Chron. de Normandie, Royal MS., 15 A., VI., f. 440.

broke the ties which bound her to Germany¹, but Matilda was very loth to obey the summons. She had left England so young that she retained but the most vague reminiscences of her parents; and the place of her amiable and departed mother had been long since supplied by King Henry's second wife, the fair Adelia of Louvaine. Her education and associations too were exclusively German, and perhaps more than all the rest, she had been so long accustomed to the deferential homage of all who approached her, moving as she did amidst the splendours of an imperial court, of which she had long formed the chief attraction, that, even after she was no longer entitled to such exclusive service, she was very reluctant to abandon her adopted country. Perhaps her unwillingness may be partly attributed to the splendid dowry which had been bequeathed to her by the late Emperor, part of which she was to lose on quitting Germany².

The royal widow, then only in her twenty-second year, formed such an object of interest to many of the powerful German nobles, that they warmly urged her father to permit her to remain among them, as the wife of whichever she might condescend to choose³; this enthusiasm, manifested by those who had possessed so many opportunities of judging of her character, tends to prove that, in her first marriage, the conduct of the Empress was unblamable, and that she had not then begun to display that wilful obstinacy and repulsive haughtiness which afterwards alienated from her so many hearts. William of Malmsbury, referring to this period of her life, says she exhibited the fortitude of her father with the piety of her mother, nor would it be easy to decide whether piety or energy prevailed in her character. But, after the melancholy death of his son, the heart of King Henry

¹ Gul. Gemet., Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 577.

² Sim. Dun., p. 251, Twysden.

³ Gul. Gemet., ut supra. Benoit., f. 246, col. 1, Harl. MS., 1717.

clung with fond affection to this only surviving child, and he persisted in his desire for her return. A cortège even more splendid than that which had attended her, when, an almost unconscious child, she went to share the imperial throne, was sent by the king to escort the widowed Matilda, and it was swelled by several of the German princes, who, hoping a personal application to her father might prove more successful, accompanied or followed their royal mistress to Normandy, where the king was then staying, in order to press their suit¹; but Henry, delighted with the recovery of his daughter, was not a whit more pliable than before, and pleading that, as his heiress, he destined her to succeed him on the throne of England, he absolutely refused again to part with her. We do not learn that the Empress herself entertained a peculiar partiality for any of her German suitors, and they one by one retired, disappointed and crest-fallen, leaving Matilda with her affectionate father in Normandy².

The king, anxious to show his heiress to his English subjects, and to secure for her their oaths of allegiance, set sail with her and Queen Adelicia, in 1126, for England³. Here she was met by her uncle, David, King of Scotland, and after the Christmas festival had been observed in great state at Windsor, Henry, taking advantage of the presence of his illustrious guest, assembled at London a council of all his nobles and barons, and presenting to them his darling daughter, then in the prime of womanly beauty⁴, he lamented, in a pathetic speech, the loss he had sustained in the premature death of his

¹ Gul. Gemet., Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 577. Benoit., f. 246 b.

² Malmsbury says that some Lorraine princes followed her to England during the succeeding years, but were rejected by the king on account of his preference for the Earl of Anjou. p. 175.

³ Matthew of Westminster, edit. 1570, book ii., p. 32. Malmsbury, p. 175. Saxon Annals, p. 230.

⁴ Matt. Paris, vol. ii., p. 70.

son, and pointing out the blessings likely to accrue from the undisputed succession of the descendant of their Norman and Saxon monarchs, demanded their oaths of fealty to the Lady Matilda¹. The Scottish historians ascribe much of the success of King Henry's eloquence on this occasion, to the influence and example of their king; the affair is thus described by one of their rhyming chroniclers².

“ A thousand, a hundred, twenty and seven,
 Since Mary bare the King of Heaven,
 Davy, then King of Scotland,
 And all the states of England,
 At London all assembled were.
 The King of Scotland, Davy, there
 Gert³ all the states bound be
 To the empress in fealty.
 His sister's daughter, Dame Maud,
 By name that time she was called,
 On the Circumcision-day
 This oath of fealty there swore they⁴. ”

This homage was duly recorded in a signed and sealed deed, which King David took back with him to Scotland⁵.

¹ Gul. Gemet., ut supra.

² Wyntowni's Orygynale Chronykyl of Scotland. Edited by Macpherson, vol. i., p. 297.

³ Compelled.

⁴ The following is the original orthography :—

“ A thowsand a hundyr twenty and sevyn,
 Fra Mary bare the kyng of Heavyn,
 Dawy, than kyng of Scotland
 And hale the Statis of Ingland,
 At Lundyn all assembled were.
 The kyng of Scotland, Dawy, there
 Gert all the Statis bundyn be
 Till the Emprys in Fewte.
 Hys systyr Dowchtyr, Dame Mald,
 Be name that tyme scho wes cald,
 On the Circumcysiowne day
 This othe of Fealte thare swore thei. ”

⁵ This deed was afterwards purchased by John Harding, the rhyming chronicler,

“ With many *mo* for four hundred marks and fifty
 At commandment and bidding of the fifth King Henry. ”—

Harding's Chronicle, p. 102 b.

Not a single objection was raised by the haughty barons, though never before had they been called to bend the knee to one of the weaker sex; nay, there was a degree of emulation among them as to who should be the first to kiss the hand of the "most excellent Augusta." The post of honour was yielded to King David, as due to his royal dignity; and then the contest was renewed between Stephen, Earl of Mortagne, the nephew of the king, and Robert, Earl of Gloucester, his natural son; but it was not merely their eagerness to show their duty to Matilda, that caused this gallant strife; the post belonged to the first prince of the blood royal, and each was anxious to claim the precedence. At length Earl Stephen gained the point, and, after taking the oaths himself, he administered them to the other nobles¹.

After this ceremony was concluded, Matilda remained for some time with her father and her young step-mother, with whom she seems to have been on terms of the most friendly intimacy, for we are informed that she took up her constant abode in the king's chamber with the queen². She had brought into England many valuable treasures, of which she had become possessed during her residence in Germany; but that which she most highly prized was the hand of St. James the Apostle, which relic the king, at her request, presented to the abbey of Reading³.

Early in the spring of the year, the royal party left London, and went to reside in the pleasant summer palace of Woodstock, whence they removed at Whitsuntide to Winchester; but although the Augusta had no

¹ Malmesbury, p. 175. Sim. Dun., Twysden, col. 254. Hemingford, Gale, vol. ii., p. 476. Saxon Annals, p. 230.

² It has been said that Matilda was subjected to a personal restraint, but the words of Paris, vol. i., p. 70, "*Habitavit in thalamo ejus (i.e., regis) cum reginâ,*" certainly give no such idea. Matt. West., lib. ii., p. 32. Memorials of the Howard Family, by H. Howard, Esq., of Corby Castle, Append. No. X.

³ Regist. Chart. Reading, Harl. MS., 1708, fol. 15, b. Monast. Anglic., vol. iv., p. 41.

establishment of her own, in the kingdom of which she was the acknowledged heiress, yet she occupied a conspicuous station in her father's court; the contemporary author of the continuation of Florence of Worcester tells us, "she was maintained near her father with excellent honour¹." The Saxon annals expressly assert, that all affairs of state were transacted with her advice and concurrence²; and her name is also found affixed along with that of the king and queen, to state documents³.

Matilda did not long remain in this position. Her hand was too tempting a prize not to be eagerly courted; and Foulk, Earl of Anjou, long the most troublesome enemy of Henry in his continental possessions, entered into negotiations to unite her with his young son and heir Geoffry. Piers of Langtoft thus describes his wooing:—

"Then died the Emperour. Henry for Mald sent
As Emperess with honour Malde to Ingland went.
Henry was alle glad of his doughter comyng.
Not long after she had prayer for weddyng.
The gode erle of Anjou, of Mald herd he say;
Fulle richely I trowe, to her took his way.
He ryved up at Dover, and dight him eft all bone⁴,
When alle were wel overe, to London cam he sone.
The erle so wel spede till our kyng Henry
That his sonne should wed, and Malde was alle redy.
The Imperatrice was dight as lady felle to be⁵.
With her went many a knight tille Anjou that contree⁶.

But however well the "gode erle" sped with King Henry, who is indeed said by some of our historians to have been the first to propose this marriage, and to whom,

¹ p. 662, Flores Historiarum.

² Gibson's edition, p. 230.

³ See an inspeximus in the Rotulus Cartarum, 18 Edward I., membrane 13.

⁴ Dressed himself bonnily.

⁵ As it became a lady to be.

⁶ Vol. i., p. 107. We are compelled to commit the literary sacrilege of modernizing somewhat the orthography of our bards, which would otherwise be unintelligible to ordinary readers.

in a political point of view, it was important and desirable, it was far otherwise with his daughter. Whether a secret doubt about the death of her former lord had anything to do with her reluctance to consent to these nuptials, or whether a tenderer, though less pardonable, attachment for her handsome but married cousin Stephen of Blois influenced her, we cannot say; but without such obstacles, there were others sufficiently apparent, which wrought strongly on the mind of the haughty Matilda. During the whole of her after-life, she clung with extreme tenacity to the high-sounding titles to which her ear had been so familiar from childhood; and "the most excellent empress," or "the most serene Augusta," are the appellations by which she was distinguished by her friends and flatterers, while those of the opposite party could inflict no severer pang upon the imperial widow, than by simply styling her the Countess of Anjou¹. Another objection was the youthfulness of the consort, whom her father had provided for her. Matilda had been wont to look up with reverence to a spouse more than twice her own age; and the idea of accepting a beardless boy as her lord and master, must have been peculiarly repugnant to her feelings; and it seems strange that her father should thus compel his darling child to a union so contrary to her inclination; but dearly as Henry loved his daughter, he loved his own interests still better. Foulk of Anjou had lately rendered himself more formidable than ever, by the warmth with which he had espoused the cause of the wronged and disinherited William Clito, the only son of Henry's elder brother, the long-imprisoned captive, Duke Robert of Normandy², during whose childhood Henry had remained in peaceable possession of Normandy, thus leav-

¹ See *Gul. Gemet.*, as compared with the author of *Gesta Stephani Regis* in *Duchèsne*.

² *Ord. Vit.*, p. 737, *Bouquet*, vol. xii. *Acher's Spicilegium*, vol. iii., p. 479.

ing the grandson and direct lineal heir of the mighty Conqueror without a foot of land to call his own; but as the boy grew up, he showed that he was not of a temper to submit tamely to be thus displaced.

The unsuccessful struggles of this brave but unfortunate youth to win back his paternal inheritance, are not unfitted for the pages of romance. Henry, as might be expected, regarded his gallant nephew with a very jealous eye, and was continually plotting to deprive him of those supporters whom the tale of his wrongs had disposed to assist him; and the importance the king attached to this object may be estimated by the fact, that the hand of the heiress of England was given as a bribe to induce Foulk of Anjou to desert his protégé.

The secrecy which the king maintained upon the important point of his daughter's marriage, shows that he was aware it would meet with general disapprobation; and the very pains taken by the courtly chroniclers of the day to prove that the empress was not at all demeaned by allying herself with a house from which the Capetian dynasty of French monarchs derived their descent demonstrate that they were arguing against general opinion. Passing over the fable repeated by Bourdigné, which, formed according to the true doctrine of antiquarian etymologists, that consonants are changeable at pleasure, and vowels go for nothing, derives the name and descent of the Anjevins, from the far-famed hero of classic lore, Ajax Telamon¹; our more credible historians Gulielmus Gemeticensis², and Benoit³, are peculiarly eloquent on the subject of the dignity of the house of Anjou. The latter, with a comical assumption of superior learning, assures us that, although those who have never read history may think it very unsuitable that an empress of

¹ Malmsbury, p. 175. Gul. Gemet., Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 577.

² Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 578.

³ Fol. 246 b, col. 2, f. 247, col. 1, Harl. MS., 1717.

Rome should wed an earl of Anjou, yet he can easily prove the contrary, thus ingeniously attributing the objections solely to ignorance, and then proceeding to recount the great descent of the earls of Anjou¹. But the idea of laying aside the imperial diadem for the coronet of the peer, rankled sorely in the breast of the Augusta; and she recked not, though the house to which that peer belonged, was the noblest in France, and had often caused its sovereigns to tremble before their seneschals—the important office of seneschal of France being hereditary in the House of Anjou².

¹ Fol. 247, col. 2.

² Hugh le Clerc, ambassador of Foulk of Anjou, at the court of France, gives a description of the ceremonies connected with this office, and the importance attached to it, so characteristic of the feudal times, and so strongly marking the hauteur of the Angevin earls, that we shall insert it.

During one of the temporary quarrels between Louis VI. and Foulk, the latter was deprived by the king of his office of seneschal, which was bestowed on William de Garland. On their reconciliation, Foulk of course demanded to be reinstated. In the true spirit of the feudal times, however, he consented to permit Garland and his family to retain the office, on condition of their doing homage for it. But the new seneschals had to perform a variety of services, as conditions of this consent, some of which were as follows:—"When the Angevin earl appears at court, the seneschal shall provide lodging for him, meet him on his approach, announce his arrival to the monarch, conduct him to the royal presence, and then to his apartments. At the coronation banquet, he shall provide a beautiful couch, covered with tapestry, on which the earl shall sit until the first dish comes in; then rising, and unclasping his cloak, he shall take the dish from the hands of the seneschal, and present it to the king and queen, and returning it to the seneschal, command him in future to serve at the royal table. The same ceremony shall be performed with all the other dishes; and when the earl chooses to retire to his lodgings, the seneschal shall accompany him. The steed on which the earl rides to court shall belong, as a feudal appanage, to the king's cook, and his cloak to the major domo." So much for the coronation ceremonials. In war, the stately Earl of Anjou was to be treated with equal attention. Whenever he chose to attend his king in person, a tent capable of containing 200 men, with proper apparatus for carrying and setting it up, was to be provided by the seneschal for him. If he chose to return it at the close of the expedition, well and good; if not, the unfortunate seneschal was to furnish another the next time it was needed. All these, however, were mere matters of form: stipulations of far greater importance were ceded to the House of Anjou by the

The ceremony of betrothal took place in 1127, although Geoffry, being only in his fifteenth year, was still too young to be married¹; but notwithstanding this, Henry shortly afterwards sent his daughter over to Normandy, in the care of Brian, son of Alan, Earl of Richmond, under pretence of completing her marriage. This proceeding on the part of the king appears somewhat mysterious, as he was passionately fond of Matilda, and had now laid aside all hopes of ever having another son. Yet, if we consider the suspicious rumours that were afloat, with reference to the penchant of the empress for her cousin Stephen of Blois, who with his wife, Matilda of Boulogne, were then constant residents at the English court, it will cease to excite surprise that Henry should have gladly availed himself of any pretext to remove his daughter from so dangerous a vicinity. In the autumn he followed her to Normandy², and they spent the winter there together.

Some historians place the date of Matilda's marriage in the autumn of 1127; but Jean de Marmoutier, the contemporary author of the Life of Geoffry Plantagenet, to whom we are indebted for all the particulars of this wedding, tells us that it was celebrated at the feast of Whitsuntide, after the young earl had been knighted at Rouen, by his future father-in-law³. Now, as Henry did not arrive in Normandy till August 1127, the union could not

French king, which are certainly somewhat extraordinary. Whatever the earl might do, whether good or ill, he was never to be blamed in presence of the king. All his decisions in the courts of justice, whether in France or Anjou, were to be considered binding; and in case of any contest arising about judgments given by others in the French court, an ultimate appeal was allowed to that of Anjou; thus investing the earl with greater power in this respect than that possessed by the sovereign himself. Hugh le Clerc, from whom we have derived the foregoing particulars, says he frequently saw all these things done, and that judgments given in France were often amended in Anjou. Bouquet, vol. xii., pp. 494-5.

¹ He was born on the 24th of August, 1113. See Chron. St. Albini of Anjou, p. 480, and other Angevin historians, in Bouquet, vol. xii.

² Sim. Dun., p. 255, Twysden. Sax. Ann., p. 230.

³ Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 521.

in this case have taken place before the spring of the following year 1128, which is the date assigned by Gervase¹. Since, however, two charters are in existence², dated in 1127, "when the king gave his daughter to Geoffry, Earl of Anjou," it would seem that the ceremony of betrothal must have taken place in that year.

Very splendid were the preparations made by the monarch for the imposing ceremonial of knighting his intended son-in-law—an indispensable preliminary to his marriage, though he had not nearly reached the customary age of twenty-one—nor was it made a matter of less importance by the young Geoffry himself. Accompanied by a train of five barons and twenty-five noble youths, who were to share his honours, and escorted by a troop of soldiers, he arrived at Rouen, where he was welcomed by several English lords, who were sent to conduct him to the royal presence. When he entered the hall, the king, contrary to his usual custom, rose to meet him, pressed him in a warm embrace, gave him a paternal kiss, and seated him by his side. He then entered into conversation with him, and proposed many trying questions, all which the youth answered with a skill and readiness of wit that surprised and delighted him. On the dawn of the following morning, the preparations for the important chivalric ceremony commenced. After performing the usual ablutions of the bath, Geoffry put on an under garment of fine twined linen, over which was a robe inwrought with gold, and then a superb cloak of the most costly purple: his hose were silken, and he wore boots, on which were emblazoned in front the golden lioncels, his national emblem. His companions also were all accoutred, though less gorgeously, in purple and fine linen. After they had received the

¹ See p. 1339, Twysden. The Chronicle of Tours places it as late as 1129, Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 471.

² See Brig. Hist. des Comtes d'Alençon, p. 106, and Bouquet, xii., 471 note *a*.

magic acolade, horses and arms were brought for the newly-created knights, and putting on a coat of mail, so skilfully made that no lance could pierce it, buckling on his spurs, with a shield round his neck, and a magnificent casque studded with gems adorning his brow, the young hero received from his royal father-in-law an antique sword, the workmanship of the celebrated forger Veland¹, "which," says our chronicler, "had cost him many an hour's labour and sweat;" and taking his tough ash-spear in his hand, he mounted the superb Spanish war-steed prepared for him, whose swiftness is reported to have outstripped that of the birds themselves; and surrounded by his young companions, but pre-eminent among them all, paraded in state the streets of Rouen. The whole of that day, and the following week, were spent in a ceaseless round of festivities².

It does not appear that the bride-elect condescended to grace these rejoicings with her presence. In moody seclusion she seems to have brooded over the past, the present, and the future; and if a vision of her cousin Stephen blended itself with her dreamings, it could but be to excite the hopeless wish that he had been in the place of the gallant but despised youth who was so soon to claim her hand.

Henry had determined that the nuptials should take place at Mons, within the domains of Anjou, and thither accordingly Earl Foulk proceeded to be ready to welcome the bridal train, which consisted of the king himself, his daughter and her elect bridegroom, with an almost interminable suite of prelates and barons, who came to be present at the ceremonies. The marriage was solemnized

¹ See a curious dissertation on this armourer, to whom almost all the *chefs-d'œuvre* of armoury in the middle ages are attributed, entitled "Veland le Forgeron," published by G. M. Depping and Francisque Michel.

² Johan. Mon. Major. Monast., Vita Goffridi Plantagenet, Bouquet, vol. xii., pp. 520-1.

at the cathedral church of St. Julian's, by Turgisius, Bishop of Avranches¹. As a necessary preliminary, both parties were asked whether the solemn step they were about to take was with their free consent, and both answered in the affirmative², the reluctant bride having doubtless previously experienced how fruitless would be any attempt at resistance.

Great was the delight of all classes of people on this occasion; entertainments were given on a large scale, and the king caused a proclamation to be set forth, announcing that any person, of whatever age, rank, or degree, who refused to join in the festivities, should be considered as guilty of the crime of *lèse majesté*. This stern decree brought together so numerous an assemblage, that an opening or vent-hole was made in the great hall for the escape of the smoke caused by the torches of the revellers, which still remains as a memorial of this great festival³.

After three weeks devoted to feastings and revellings, the company at length broke up. Henry, bestowing an affectionate kiss on his daughter and her spouse, took his departure, and soon after, the young couple, led by Earl Foulk himself, prepared for their entry into Angers, the capital of Anjou. Here, too, they were received with the most enthusiastic demonstrations of joy; when their *cortège* was seen approaching, the whole city came forth to meet them; the bells rang their merriest peals; the houses and churches were richly adorned, and a long train of white-robed priests, bearing tapers and crucifixes, and chanting hymns and songs of joy, went to greet their new lady, and to conduct her to her home⁴.

"The house of the Earls of Anjou," says Diceto⁵, "is a

¹ Ord. Vit., Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 746.

² Joh. Mon., Vita Gauf., ut supra.

³ Histoire des Evêques de Mons, p. 425.

⁴ Johan. Mon., Vita Gaufredi, Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 522.

⁵ Twysden, p. 525.

most spacious building on the south side of the town, worthy the name of a palace, if those more recently constructed had not carried the luxuries of royal dwellings to such an extreme." It had recently undergone some great improvements under the supervision of the celebrated Bertrade de Montfort, wife of Foulk Rechin¹, and on one side, the eye wandered over vine-clad mountains rising beyond the suburbs, while, on the other, were to be seen the deep-rolling waters of the Maine, studded with white sails, which offered a copious outlet to the commerce of the country. But where domestic peace is wanting, no circumstances of external comfort can compensate for its loss, and the stately Augusta was not prepared to be pleased with anything she met with in the obscure capital of a French province. Yet, if we may credit the contemporary writers, her young husband possessed all the personal advantages likely to captivate her regards². Benoit says he was "a great knight, and strong, and handsome, and valiant, and wise, and victorious;" and that "there was no prince more valiant of his rank or importance, either beyond the mountains or in all France³." His figure was slight, but nervous and well proportioned; his complexion rather ruddy, and his eyes full of fire; and he seems to have deserved the surname of *Formosus*, or *le Bel*, by which he is frequently distinguished. He was graceful in manners, elegant in language, well read, especially in history, and instructed in Latin; "so that he was not at all dismayed, even when he had to bear a part in conversation with the learned⁴." He was, of

¹ Jean Hiretius, *Hist. des Antiquités d'Anjou*, p. 114.

² The author of the *Lives of the Bishops of Mons*, writing of this marriage, calls it that of "proba probo, generosa nobili, docta sapienti." Mabillon *Vetera Analecta*, p. 324.

³ f. 247, col. 1, Harl. MS., 1717.

⁴ Bourdigné, *Chron. d'Anjou*, vol. i., p. 309. Johannes Monachus, p. 529. *Gesta Consul. Andeg.*, p. 503, and *Gest. Pon. Cenom.*, p. 555, Bouquet, vol. xii.

course, thoroughly versed in the martial exercises of the day, and passionately fond of field-sports¹. A curious proof of his ardent love of the greenwood is preserved in the name of a long line of English sovereigns, which was derived from the sprig of the yellow broom, "*planta genista*" (the *Cytisus scoparius* of our modern Floras), with which the young huntsman used to decorate his cap, and thence derived the surname of Plantagenet².

Soon after Matilda's arrival in Anjou, her father-in-law, Earl Foulk, then a widower, received an invitation to go over to Jerusalem and wed Milisenda, daughter and heiress of King Baldwin. The prospect of the reversionary crown of the holy city was too tempting to be resisted, so, abandoning his European dominions into the hands of his son, he accepted the proposal and left Europe for Palestine³. His departure was an unfortunate circumstance for the empress, since it removed the only person who could exercise any authority over her husband, just at the time when the intoxicating influence of newly acquired power, always dangerous to a character not maturely formed, rendered judicious restraint the most necessary.

The reckless and independent spirit of Geoffry was ill suited to conciliate his bride; had a little gentleness and tact been used in the treatment of the high-born lady, who, according to her own ideas, had thus greatly humbled herself, the results might have been different, but Geoffry scorned to soothe, in the vain hope of being able to subdue the haughty temper of his consort, while she

¹ Wace's *Roman de Rou*, vol. ii., p. 354.

² Thierry, *Hist. de la Conquête d'Angleterre*, 8vo. edit., p. 188. Chron. Alberic, Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 581. See this subject curiously allegorised in Burk's poem of the great Plantagenet. The broom also gave a name to the knightly order of "*la Geneste*," instituted by St. Louis of France on his marriage. Reid's *Historical Botany*, vol. ii., p. 141.

³ Alb. Trium Font., p. 698, and Chron. de Norm., p. 495, Bouquet, vol. xiii.

regarded her boy-bridegroom with a feeling of ineffable contempt. In reference to this matrimonial discord, Robert of Gloucester says:—

“Sythe thorough some high harte there wax a litel strife
Bytwene the erl of Anjou and the emperesse his wife.
She was too proud agen hir lord for her highnesse,
For she was heir and king’s doughter and eke emperesse¹.”

Notwithstanding Matilda’s superiority of rank, however, she came off the worst in these conjugal quarrels, for the earl, provoked at length beyond endurance, repudiated his unmanageable wife, and banished her with dishonour from his dominions, accompanied by only a few attendants. This took place in July, 1129, within little more than a year after their marriage. The indignant princess retired immediately to Rouen, and sent messengers to inform her father of the insults she had received². This news was a severe blow to the king, who, having at length succeeded in restoring peace to his continental dominions, had returned a short time previously in triumph to England. It is evident that he did not free his daughter from blame, having already had proof of her wilfulness of temper, for he neither joined her in Normandy, nor sent for her to England, and for nearly a year the Augusta kept her solitary state at Rouen, digesting as best she might the consequences of her conduct. In the following spring, however, Henry came over to the continent, and his daughter hastened to meet him, and to pour forth her complaints into his ear; if the king did succeed in producing a reconciliation between her and her offended spouse, it was but temporary, for in the summer of 1131, we find that on Henry’s return to England, the Empress accompanied him; and after encountering a terrible tempest on their voyage, she once again landed on her native shores³.

¹ Vol. ii., p. 442.

² Sim. Dun., p. 256, Twysden.

³ Brompton, p. 1019, Twysden. Huntingdon, *Scriptores post Bedam*, p. 383.

Matilda had, however, some warm partisans in her domestic quarrels, even amongst those whose position threw them into intimate association with her husband. Hildebert, Bishop of Mans, wrote to her, anxiously requesting information as to how her father was affected by the contumely that had been offered to his daughter, and praying her to lay open to him as a friend whatever news she could communicate of herself or the king¹. The same prelate addressed to her an ode in the most extravagantly laudatory terms, commending her queenly countenance, stately step, and beauty unadorned by art, and concluding by allusions to her late mother, Matilda of Scotland, who had been a great favourite with him².

At a parliament which was assembled soon afterwards at Northampton, the king caused his nobles to renew their homage to Matilda; the reason for which seems to have been that, on the first burst of indignation excited by the information of her marriage with the Earl of Anjou, without the formal consent of the barons, many of them had declared that, by this step, they considered themselves freed from the oaths they had previously taken, and Henry, to avoid the possibility of contention on this all-important point, chose that the ceremony should be repeated; on this occasion as before, Earl Stephen of Blois, the future supplanter of her rights, was the first to pay her the required homage³.

In spite of the rude manner in which the young Angevin earl had dismissed his spouse, he was somewhat disconcerted, when her royal father so far embraced her cause, as to permit her to return with him to England. He had, doubtless, hoped that a permanent reconciliation would have been brought about through his mediation, without the compromise of his own dignity. Now, how-

¹ Hildebert's Letters, book iii., No. XIV.

² Hildebert's Works, col. 1334.

³ Huntingdon, p. 384. Malmsbury, p. 177.

ever, he condescended to send a petition to the imperial virago and her father, requesting that she would deign to return to him; and the subject being laid before parliament, they unanimously seconded his wishes; for it appeared hopeless that Queen Adelicia, after an unfruitful marriage of nearly twelve years, should bring an heir to the crown; and in Matilda rested the sole hope of a succession, through the daughter of their idolized Saxon monarchs, Matilda of Scotland. Thus entreated, the Augusta vouchsafed to comply with the wishes of the nation, and returned to Anjou¹, where she was received with the pomp "worthy so noble a lady." The joy occasioned by her return, and the consequent renewed friendship between the Plantagenet earl and the king may be estimated by a letter which Hildebert, Archbishop of Mans, wrote to Henry, on the first rumour of the glad intelligence, wherein he says, "that in his present state of sickness, nothing could afford him any pleasure, but the idea of the good terms that would now subsist between the two powers, and that in all things concerning Matilda's welfare the earl had consented to be guided by the counsels of her father²." From this it would appear that the return of the empress was not wholly unconditional.

The earl and countess lived together for some time more amicably than before; probably the able and energetic character of Geoffry, who was now fast advancing to manhood, inspired more respect into his mature consort, while, taught by past experience, he ceased to demand or expect anything like submission from her. But what contributed far more than anything else to their continued concord, was the prospect that presently appeared of Matilda's becoming a mother. This circumstance, so ardently longed for by their subjects³, was a source of the

¹ Brompton, p. 1019, Twysden. Huntingdon, pp. 384-5.

² *Epistolæ Hildeberti*, Bouquet, vol. xv., p. 327.

³ Hugh de Fleury, a monk, who dedicated to Matilda a book of

most sincere gratification to them both, which was brought to its height, when in March, 1133, a young prince was born at Mans, whither the empress had retired to wait her accouchement¹. Matthew Paris mentions a report very derogatory to the character of Matilda, with reference to the birth of this child, namely, that he was not the son of Geoffry of Anjou, but of Earl Stephen of Blois, for whom the empress entertained a strong and, as he would insinuate, a criminal preference. A simple reference to dates enables us in this, as in many similar instances, to arrive at the truth. The parliament of Northampton was held in the autumn of 1131², and almost immediately after, Matilda returned to Anjou, whereas her son's birth did not take place till the commencement of the year 1133, thus completely freeing her from all suspicion on this point. The joy was universal both in England and Anjou, when the news of the birth of a prince became known. King Henry, in a transport of delight, called together his barons, and required them to renew their oaths to the absent empress, and to acknowledge the infant, who was named Henry, in compliment to his grandfather, as his heir and successor, in case of her death³. He also granted lands to the value of fifteen marks a-year to the priest who baptized the child⁴.

But all the gladness felt by princes and people was as nothing compared with the intense delight with which the imperial mother clasped her first-born infant to her bosom; the long-closed fountain of her affections had at length found a channel in which they might freely flow,

French history, expresses in the warmest terms his anxious hopes, and those of the people, for her fruitfulness and prosperity. Martène, *Thesaurus Anecdorum*, vol. i., col. 327.

¹ Ralph de Diceto, p. 595, Twysden. *Chron. Fiscan.*, p. 778, *Chron. St. Flor.*, p. 490, *Chron. St. Albin Andeg.*, p. 480, Bouquet, vol. xii.

² Huntingdon, p. 384. Malmsbury, p. 177.

³ Diceto and J. Hagulstad, Twysden, pp. 505 and 258. Walsingham's *Ypodigma Neustriæ*. Camden's *Anglica*, p. 444.

⁴ *Ex Gest. Pont. Cenom.*, Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 553.

and she loved him with an ardency of which an energetic nature is alone capable. She instantly testified her gratitude, by sending an offering to the church of St. Julian; and at the baptism of the prince, which was arranged to take place on the 25th of March, in the presence of the clergy and people, tears were mingled with her solemn vows as she dedicated this precious infant on the altar of St. Julian¹. It is strange, amidst all the sorrows of Matilda's after career, that the only time in which she is recorded to have given way to tears, they were wrung from her by the first tender gushings of a mother's love. We shall frequently have occasion, in the sequel, to allude to this redeeming trait in Matilda's character, as it developed itself in the deep devotion with which she ever regarded the interests of young Henry; for though his birth was followed, in the three succeeding years, by that of his brothers Geoffry and William, yet her younger sons do not seem by any means to have engrossed an equal portion of her regard.

The period that elapsed between the birth of Prince Henry and the death of the king was principally spent by Matilda at the court of Normandy, where her father passed the last two years of his life, having come over in the summer of 1133 to feast his eyes with a sight of his infant grandson². The delight of the king is thus quaintly described by Robert of Gloucester³:—

“ Glad was kyng Henry when tydings hym com
Of that chyld to be hys heyr of hys kyngdom,
Noblye his Ester feast he held for thys case
In hys fayr halle of Oxford that then newe was.
Then wende he to Normandy, and al that year
For joye of the yonge child he byleved there.”

From this we may infer that Matilda had brought the

¹ Ex Gest. Pont. Cenom., Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 553.

² Matt. West, book ii., p. 34. Gervase, Twysden, p. 1339. Paris, vol. i., p. 73.

³ Vol. ii., pp. 441-2.

treasured infant to Normandy to meet his royal grandsire. Immediately on his arrival, Henry summoned the Archbishop of Rouen and the Norman nobles, and presenting to them the empress and her young son, exacted from them the usual oaths of fidelity and homage¹. The title of king seems actually to have been conferred on the child by his grandfather, for letters of Geoffry Plantagenet are still in existence, dated in the reign of his "son Henry, King of England²," and the earl's death took place in 1151, three years before the actual accession of Henry II. to the throne of England.

Earl Geoffry was an occasional visitor at the court of his father-in-law, but did not pass much of his time there; indeed, there were bones of contention between him and the king that were the cause of perpetual discord. Geoffry argued long and warmly in favour of a claim he sought to substantiate to some Norman castles which he pleaded had been promised to him on his marriage, but which the doughty old sceptre-bearer refused to grant, declaring he would place no one above himself in his own dominions so long as he lived, nor ever suffer an equal in the kingdom³, and the earl, in disgust, retired from the court.

The year 1134 was signalized by the appearance of a second prince, who was born at Rouen on the 1st of March, and named Geoffry, after his father⁴, and who, as well as his brother, was the object of the tenderest regard to his aged grandfather. That Henry had always been a most affectionate parent, is proved by the depth and sincerity of his sorrow when the fatal wreck of the *Blanche Nef* deprived him of his son and heir—and now his paternal feelings, which had met with but a cold response

¹ Du Moulin, p. 336.

² *L'Art de Vérifier*, vii., 101.

³ *Ord. Vit.*, Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 753.

⁴ *Rob. de Monte St. Michael*, Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 286.

in the bosom of his imperial daughter, were lavished with passionate warmth upon these infant heirs of all his honours. We quote from our old friend Piers of Langtoft¹, who, after speaking of Earl Geoffry, and “Molde that held the seignorie,” adds—

“A sonne they had full bold and his name Henrie,
Sithen had thi another that thei cald William
That was Henry’s brother : bothe of Mald cam.
Her father the kyng loved the children so
That he wold for no thing the sight of them forego.”

The name of William is here inserted instead of Geoffry, by our worthy bard, who like most of his poetic brethren, is no irrefragable authority as regards names, and would not be very scrupulous about sacrificing a *son* for the sake of a *rhyme*; he is the more excusable on this occasion, since Matilda had afterwards a son called William, although he was not born until after King Henry’s death.

The birth of the young Geoffry very nearly cost the life of his mother. After her confinement, Matilda was seized with a long and dangerous illness, and for some time her recovery was despaired of. On the near prospect of death, her conscience exhibited before her in such startling colours her many delinquences that, anxious to make her peace with Heaven, she dispensed with the most lavish profusion all the wealth of which she was possessed, as well as the treasures she had brought with her from Germany, as those for which she was indebted to the munificence of her father, to the churches in the different provinces, among the religious of both sexes, the widows and the orphans—nay, so far did she carry her generosity, that she did not spare even the silken couch on which she reposed her fevered limbs, but caused it to be sold, and the money distributed among some poor

¹ Vol. i., p. 108.

lepers. To the Cathedral of Mans, she gave three splendid altar-cloths of the most costly material, called Dorsalia, because being hung up on state occasions upon the walls, they were against the backs of those who sat near them¹. But above all others, the Abbey of Bec was honoured with special tokens of her favour. "They were," to use the words of a contemporary historian², "the most precious gifts that can be imagined both for material and workmanship, and worthy to remain till the end of time, to show forth the love of the Empress Augusta to that church, and to imprint the memory of the noble lady more deeply on the minds of the inhabitants. It is pleasant to test their value by the surprise they excite in the noblest guests, who have often seen the treasures of other churches; but be it Greek or Arab who inspects them, he is struck with the same delight³."

When the empress believed herself to be dying, she made a last request to her father, that her remains might be interred in her favourite Abbey of Bec⁴. This he refused, saying "that it became not his daughter, the Empress Augusta, who had been crowned with the imperial diadem in the City of Rome, by the hands of the highest pontiff, to be interred in any monastery, however celebrated; that she should be buried at Rouen, and in the cathedral church; where the bones of her far-famed ancestors, Rollo and William Longspade, had so long rested, she too should rest⁵." But the wilful Matilda had not even yet learned to yield, and another messenger was dispatched to inform the king that her mind could never be at rest until her petition was granted;—whereupon he promised compliance. Our chronicler heaps the highest eulogies upon Matilda for her conduct in this affair. "A

¹ Ex Gestis Pontificum Cænomanniæ, Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 553.

² Gul. Gemet., Duchèsne, Rer. Norm. Script. Ant., p. 305.

³ Gul. Gemet., ut supra.

⁴ Chronicon Beccense, Dacher, Opera Lanfranci, p. 9.

⁵ Gul. Gemet., ut supra, p. 306.

woman she was of wonderful virtue and good counsel, thinking little of secular pomp in the disposition of her body, for she knew that it was more *wholesome* for the souls of the dead, that they should be buried where prayers were offered for them most suppliantly and devoutly."

In recompense of her liberal benefactions, as we are informed, she was at length restored to health, no small relief to the worthy monks of Bec, who were "fainting and ready to expire under the burden of their ceaseless prayers for their benefactress¹."

During the whole of this year, King Henry, detained by his tender affection for his infant grandchildren², had remained quietly in Normandy, but in the spring of 1135 new troubles arose. Earl Geoffry, weary of being trifled with, began to form a party in Normandy, to urge his claims by stronger arguments than mere words, and he was forthwith joined by William Talvas, one of the most powerful Norman nobles, the son and heir of the infamous Robert de Belesme, who inherited much of the turbulent spirit of his family. Thus supported, the fiery earl ventured to attack several castles; which insolent conduct roused the aged monarch to such a pitch of fury that he declared he would take away his daughter to England, and never permit her to return to her rebel spouse: but fresh discords detained him in Normandy, and prevented him from fulfilling his threat³.

Another provocation still more irritating was added. The Viscount Roceline, a noble of Maine, who had married an illegitimate daughter of the king, having incurred the displeasure of Earl Geoffry, he attacked him and burnt his castle to the ground, altogether heedless of his near

¹ Gul. Gemet., ut supra, p. 305. Chron. Beccense, p. 9, in Dacher's Lanfranc.

² Rob. de Monte, Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 286.

³ Ord. Vit., Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 754.

relationship to Henry¹. Fearing a general defection of his Norman nobles, some of whom manifested a strong leaning to the Angevin earl, Henry determined to act vigorously, and strike awe into them; he accordingly summoned William Talvas to court, and on the rebel nobleman refusing to appear, he forfeited his lands and took forcible possession of his castles², whereupon the offended baron retired to Anjou, where he shared the hospitality of his patron, Earl Geoffry.

Matilda, whose temper had been softened by her late illness, assumed for once in her life, the office of peacemaker. It would seem that, at this period, she was on good terms with her lord. Some historians assert that it was through the baneful influence Matilda exercised on her father's mind that the quarrels between him and Earl Geoffry proceeded to such a length, but this statement is controverted from the testimony afforded by a charter of Geoffry dated at this period, in which he confers some favour on the monks of St. Nicholas of Anjou, at the special request and intervention of his wife, Matilda the Empress³, and also by the fact that, doubtless at his request, she supplicated her father with the most persevering importunity, to pardon and restore the rebel Talvas. This, however, the king steadily refused to do—"not from any contempt of his beloved daughter, but lest he should forfeit the reverence due to him from Talvas and the other barons, if he thus quickly and easily remitted his offences⁴." Unaccustomed to have her will thus thwarted, the indignant empress abruptly took her departure from the court of her father, without the ceremony of taking leave, and with her two children joined her husband at Anjou⁵.

¹ Ord. Vit., Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 754.

² Ibid.

³ Martène, Thes. Anec., vol. i., col. 1344.

⁴ Gul. Gemet., Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 582.

⁵ Gul. Gemet., ut supra, Chron. de Norm., Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 254. Benoit, f. 249, col. 2, Harl. MS. 1717.

Alas, for woman's wilfulness! Matilda little knew the long train of sorrow she was bringing upon herself by that one burst of undutiful passion. Within a few weeks of her withdrawal from Normandy, Henry was seized with an illness, said to have been induced by his anger at her conduct¹, which speedily terminated in his death; and the absence of Matilda from his side at that important juncture gave colour to the assertion, so useful to her rival Stephen, that on his death-bed the angry father had disinherited her, and declared her cousin Stephen of Blois, heir to both England and Normandy². Although this report, sworn to by Hugh Bigod, the steward of King Henry's household, paved the way for Earl Stephen, by giving those who favoured him a plausible excuse for their breach of oath, it was not the truth; for though the king had not so far forgiven the injuries of his reckless son-in-law, as to include him in his dying bequests, yet he left the whole of his dominions to his absent daughter, constituting her natural brother, Robert of Gloucester, the executor of his will, and guardian of his sister's interests³. On him also devolved the care of the funeral of his royal sire, at which the empress was not present. She never seems to have sincerely loved her father; her early separation from him had broken the clinging fondness of childhood's love; and when she returned to his court, an imperial widow, yet in all the pride of early womanhood, the sacrifice of feeling which she was compelled to make by submitting to a merely political marriage must have still further estranged her affections from him. The birth of her sons established, it is true, a strong bond of union between them, from the passionate tenderness with which they were regarded by the aged monarch; but this was not powerful enough to prevent Matilda's secretly encouraging her hus-

¹ Du Moulin, p. 339. Huntingdon, p. 385.

² Speech of Robert, Earl of Gloucester. Huntingdon, pp. 390-1.

³ Malmsbury, p. 178. Ord. Vit., Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 754.

band in those contests for immediate power, which embittered her father's last days. The implacability of temper she manifested, by withholding her presence from his dying bed, reflects a merited censure on her who, through his tenderness, was left acknowledged heiress of dominions that any crowned head in Europe might have coveted.

MATILDA,

DAUGHTER OF HENRY I.

CHAPTER II.

Struggles in Normandy—Birth of Prince William—Matilda leads troops to aid Geoffry—Forced to retire—Robert, Earl of Gloucester—Continued contests in Normandy—Matilda lands in England—Reception at Arundel—Retires to Bristol—Residence at Gloucester—Fruitless negotiations—Battle of Lincoln—Stephen brought prisoner to Matilda—Imprisoned at Bristol—Matilda holds court at Cirencester—Gains Bishop of Winchester—Arrival in that city—Stephen's party excommunicated—General homage paid to Matilda—Proclaimed Lady of England—Her progress to London—Reception—Haughty demeanour—Attempts of Londoners—Flight to Oxford—Matilda's style—Seals—Offends Bishop of Winchester—Attacks him—Is besieged by Stephen's troops—Escapes in a coffin to Gloucester—Captivity of Earl Robert—Exchanged for Stephen—Geoffry's assistance demanded—Matilda besieged in Oxford—Landing of Prince Henry—Vain attempts to raise siege—Matilda's danger—Holds a Council of War—Refuses to yield—Marvellous escape to Wallingford—Arrival of her son—Her cause declines—Return of Henry—Death of Earl Robert—Matilda retires to Normandy—Her improved character—Attachment to Henry—yields him Normandy—Visit to Paris—Death of Geoffry—Ingenious letter-bag—Death of King Stephen—Matilda attends Henry's coronation—Regent in Normandy—Her son Geoffry—Abbey of Valace—Her household—Illness—Liberal benefactions—Builds bridge at Rouen—Death of her son William—Appealed to in Becket's affair—Her judicious mediation—Correspondence with Becket, Henry, and Pope—Mediates truce between Louis and Henry—Death—Burial—Remains removed—Character.

WE now commence a fresh æra in the life of the Empress Matilda, an æra fraught with events so remarkable, that they would afford almost as much scope for the pen of

the romancer as for that of the historian; and yet bearing upon them so strongly the impress of individual character, that perhaps never in the annals of history could a crown be more truly said to be won or lost by the influence of the personal conduct of its claimant than was that of Matilda.

Not a suspicion of the fidelity of Earl Stephen, who, with other nobles, hastened to attend his uncle's dying bed, seems to have crossed the mind of the king or his daughter, and accordingly not the slightest precaution was taken against him. After her father's death, Matilda made no preparations for an immediate journey to England. With fatal confidence she appears to have considered the thrice-sworn diadem as secure as though it already glittered on her brow. She advanced, however, into Normandy, and was immediately received and acknowledged at Argenton and Damfront¹. Her course was as yet a pacific one, and her companion was a man of great talents, though of low birth, to whom Ordericus Vitalis gives the tremendous name of Guiganalgasius, who had been appointed by her father Viscount of Argenton, and who showed his gratitude by thus being the first to acknowledge the daughter of his patron; but meanwhile reports of the most serious nature reached the empress with regard to the successful pretensions of her aspiring cousin who, with small opposition, had assumed the crown of England, and also as to the dispositions of the Norman barons; and Earl Geoffry, taking the alarm, tarried to collect a powerful army, with which he hastened to the assistance of his imperial spouse. He was accompanied by his exiled guest, William Talvas, who now resumed possession of his forfeited estates, in all of which the authority of Matilda and her husband was owned²; but this

¹ Diceto, p. 505, Twysden. Ord. Vit., p. 755, Gul. Gemet., p. 584, Bouquet, vol. xii. Rob. de Monte, p. 287, vol. xiii.

² Ord. Vit., Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 755. Rob. de Monte, *ibid.*, vol. xiii., p. 287.

gleam of success was only transitory. There was a strong feeling in the minds of the haughty Normans against female domination; and although the empress had spent so much of her time among them, and even received their oaths of fealty, she had not succeeded in conciliating their regard. The Angevin troops who formed the escort of Earl Geoffry, and who, if we may credit the testimony of Ordericus, were little better than semi-barbarians, committed the most frightful ravages on the peaceful provinces of Normandy. The old and long-continued enmity between the two countries broke out afresh with fearful violence, and the Norman barons were not at all disposed to receive and own a sovereign forced upon them at the point of the Angevin lances. So strong indeed was their aversion to Matilda's rule that, before Stephen had established his pretensions to the throne of England, they invited his elder brother Theobald, the nearest male relative of the Conqueror, to occupy the vacant dukedom of Normandy¹. The great Earl of Blois, however, had too much sense to accept of a principality which he had penetration enough to see would be the object of a warm contest between two such powers as England and Anjou, and he declined their offer². Not so King Stephen; his emissaries were already busy with considerable success; and so strong did his party become, that the Plantagenet earl was compelled speedily to withdraw his troops and return to Anjou. But both sides were preparing for renewed contests. Waleran, Earl of Mellent, Stephen's general in Normandy, acted with great vigour, and Earl Geoffry was not behind-hand. Drawing together his friends and adherents, and collecting a numerous body of troops, he again advanced into Normandy, and seized on several fortresses³; but the ferocious manners of the

¹ Rob. de Monte, ut supra.

² Ord. Vit., p. 756, Bouquet, vol. xii. Alb. Trium Font., Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 699.

³ Ord. Vit., p. 757.

Angevin warriors presented a most formidable barrier to the success of their design. Such was the dread they excited that, on a report being spread of their advancing upon Lisieux, the terrified inhabitants burnt the city, and retired with precipitation, taking with them their most valuable effects, rather than fall into the hands of such an enemy. Their excesses too, had brought on a contagious disorder, which daily thinned their ranks¹.

Meanwhile the Empress Matilda, detained by the prospect of approaching maternity, yet unwilling to relinquish any part of the ground she had won, remained at Argenton, and there, on the 21st of July, 1136, gave birth to her youngest son William². She had scarcely recovered from the weakness incidental to her situation, when she made the most energetic efforts to support her husband, and substantiate her claims. By extraordinary exertions, she contrived to collect an army of twenty thousand men, and placing herself at their head, the Amazonian matron marched with all the pomp of war to join and reinforce her lord. But her succours came too late; Geoffry was then at the siege of Le Sap, and the very night previous to her arrival, had received so severe a wound in the right foot with a javelin, that he determined upon a precipitate retreat; nor could all the entreaties of his spirited help-mate, combined with the numerous reinforcements she had brought up, induce him to alter his resolution. Stung with the extreme pain occasioned by his wound, and discouraged by the mortality of his troops, the earl, forgetful of the buoyant spirit of striving against disaster inculcated in his national war cry of "rally, rally"³, on the following morning ordered a rapid retreat,

¹ Ord. Vit., p. 758.

² Chron. Albini Andeg., p. 481, Bouquet, vol. xii. Rob. de Monte, ut sup.

³ "Francois crie 'Montjoye,' et Normans 'Dexaie;'

Flamans crie 'Aras,' and Anjevin 'Rallie.'

Et li quens Thiebaut, Chartres et Passavant crie."—

Wace, Roman de Rou, quoted in Menage, Hist. de Sablé, p. 4.

and Matilda, in spite of herself, was compelled to submit. "Thus," says our chronicler, "the proud earl who entered Normandy on a foaming steed, breathing out threats of vengeance, is carried back pale, groaning, and borne on a litter, to his own country." Though the army were successful in hiding their escape from the enemy, till pursuit was out of the question, they were partially plundered of their baggage, containing their wardrobe and plate, by a band of Angevin robbers, who infested a wood through which their road lay¹.

During these troublous seasons, union of interest had cemented a cordiality of feeling between the earl and countess, and Matilda seems to have spent the winter with her lord in Angers, nursing his wound, and arranging with him the plan of the next campaign.

The following spring, an actor appeared more prominently upon the stage, whose character demands special notice from the biographer of the Empress Matilda. Robert, Earl of Gloucester, was the eldest of the numerous illegitimate sons of Henry I., and had always been the object of his father's particular regard. The earldom of Gloucester, which was bestowed on him, in connection with his marriage with the Norman heiress Sibylla Fitz Hamon, grand-daughter of the powerful Roger Montgomery, Earl of Shrewsbury and Belesme, raised him to a high rank both among the English and Norman peers². We have seen that King Henry, on his death-bed, committed to him the charge of his sister's interests, and well and wisely did the high-minded earl fulfil the commission. Whether we regard him as a private individual, a soldier, a statesman, or a general, the character of Earl Robert stands unimpeached. The unflinching loyalty and generous self-devotion with which he upheld the cause of his wayward and often perverse sister, even when she spurned

¹ Ord. Vit., Bouquet, vol. xii., pp. 759, 760. Du Moulin, p. 347.

² Gul. Gemet., p. 579, Bouquet, vol. xii.

or neglected his counsels, command the tribute of admiration ever willingly ceded to the disinterested firmness of a noble spirit, and confer upon him the well-earned epithet of a knight "sans peur et sans reproche."

Whilst the first tide of popular feeling rolled strongly in favour of the newly-crowned King Stephen, Robert, aware that it was hopeless at that time to oppose the current, and that by attempting it, he should only cripple his own future resources, went over to England, and paid a conditional homage to Stephen, but couched in such terms as left the path open to an honourable retreat. Stephen was well aware of this; his long acquaintance with the Earl of Gloucester in the English Court had made him familiar with his talents and firmness of disposition, and he became an object of great dread to the monarch¹.

In the spring of 1137, Stephen, along with his son Eustace, appeared in Normandy, to put an end at once to the troubles which the persevering Earl of Anjou was again exciting². But the throne of an usurper is ever a tottering one. Fresh disturbances recalled Stephen to England³, and notwithstanding the preponderance he had acquired in Normandy, he was glad to obtain, some writers say to purchase for the sum of 2000 marks, a truce of three years from the still formidable Earl Geoffry⁴. During his residence in Normandy, the king, fearing the effects of Earl Robert's influence in England, requested his presence at court, whither the earl accordingly repaired; but snares awaited him; for Stephen, jealous lest he should tamper with the Norman barons, gave orders that he should be privately seized and imprisoned. Robert, being warned of his danger, escaped by

¹ Malmesbury, p. 179. Rudborne's Chron., Lambeth MS., No. 183, fol. 204 b.

² Rob. de Monte, Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 288.

³ Gervase, Twysden, col. 1343.

⁴ Diceto, Twysden, p. 506. Rob. de Monte, ut supra.

withdrawing from court, and Stephen, in increasing alarm, was compelled to confess his devices, and swear not to renew any similar attempt¹. Shortly afterwards the king returned to England, but the Earl of Gloucester lingered behind; with due precaution he was sounding the Norman nobles, some of whom had begun to dislike Stephen, and to entertain a secret leaning towards the cause of Matilda, and he opened a communication with the empress, the result of which was that, early in 1138, after their plans were matured, he sent messengers to King Stephen, renouncing all homage and adherence to him, whereupon Stephen forfeited his lands in England, and of all his fair estates, Bristol was the only place left in his possession².

The truce was now broken; Earl Robert openly exerted his powerful influence in Normandy in favour of his sister; he was lord of Caen, and that strong town, the capital of Upper Normandy was yielded by him to her. Bayeux and other towns followed the example, and many nobles, who had hitherto been restrained by fear alone, now threw off the mask, and joined her party³. Matilda, on her side was not idle, and wherever she gained an advantage, availed herself of it to the utmost of her power. She did not fail, however, to exhibit at times her natural sternness of character. On one occasion, her satellites having seized an unfortunate noble of the opposite party, called Ralph de Axon, they brought him before the empress, who detained him in the most rigorous captivity, until he had delivered up to her all his castles and lands⁴.

But these successes were only the first steps in the grand design which was in contemplation.

¹ Life of Henry II., by Lord Lyttleton, vol. i., p. 181. Malmsbury, p. 180.

² Malmsbury, *ut supra*.

³ Du Moulin, p. 354.

⁴ Ord. Vit., p. 763, Bouquet, vol. xii.

England was the theatre on which the decisive blow was to be struck; and the Earl of Gloucester's extensive connections in that kingdom enabled him to obtain accurate information as to the state of affairs there. A strong party had been formed in the empress' favour, who had proceeded to actual hostilities; and though Matilda's uncle, King David of Scotland, had been defeated in his attempt to aid her cause, at the celebrated battle of the Standard, yet the discontents with Stephen's government had grown to such a height, that Robert thought the opportunity a fit one to make a descent on England. This scheme was encouraged by Baldwin de Reviers, Earl of Devonshire, who, having quarrelled with King Stephen, made his escape to Earl Geoffry, by whom, of course, he was gladly received; and pouring into the open ear of the empress his tale of wrongs, she incited him to seek vengeance by opposing Stephen's party in Normandy; while she herself, eager to depart for England, set out on her journey, leaving the charge of the continental war in the hands of her husband¹. Her children remained behind in Anjou, the care of Prince Henry's education being committed to one Master Peter of Xaintes, a man of considerable learning and great poetical powers².

With a train of only 140 knights, the heiress of England set sail, attended by her gallant brother, to rescue her kingdom from the grasp of her powerful rival³. Their passage was none of the smoothest, for we find that, during the voyage, Matilda made a vow, which was afterwards well fulfilled, to erect a monastery to the blessed Virgin, in case she landed safe on the English shores. Notre Dame du Vœu at Cherburg, owed both its erection and name to

¹ *Gesta Stephani Regis*, *Rer. Norm. Script. Ant.*, p. 937.

² *Chron. Anon.*, p. 120, *Rich. Pict.*, p. 415, *Bouquet*, vol. xii.

³ *Ibid.*, *Ord. Vit.*, p. 767, *Bouquet*, vol. xii. *Chron. Norm.*, *Rer. Norm. Script. Ant.*, p. 978. Gervase and J. Hagulstadt, Twysden, pp. 1349 and 266. *Wm. of Newbridge*, Hearne's edit., vol. i., p. 37.

this circumstance¹. On the 31st of September, 1139, the little band landed at Portsmouth, near Arundel Castle, the residence of the Dowager Queen, Adelicia of Louvaine, the step-mother and friend of the empress, then the wife of William de Albini, from whom she had previously received the promise of a kindly welcome².

Upwards of twelve years had elapsed since these two royal ladies had occupied the same chamber in the brilliant court of the mighty monarch Henry I.; and now they met under circumstances, how changed! The beautiful and amiable queen dowager was enjoying the calm tranquility of domestic life with the husband of her choice; while her step-daughter was just entering upon what she must have been well aware would prove a long and doubtful and perilous warfare.

Leaving his sister in this place of security, Earl Robert took with him twelve of the knights who formed their escort, and made a swift and secret march to Bristol, that by his presence in the western counties, where his influence was considerable, he might collect and organize the forces of Matilda's party³. The empress, however, was not long permitted to indulge her dream of fancied security; for—

“Whan Steven understode Mald was in Arondelle
With mykele folk and gode, biseged that castelle,
Mald thought of this stoure, she bithought her straitte
And doubted dishonoure that mot come thorough disceite⁴.”

In spite of the insinuation of Piers de Langtoft, contained in the last line, it does not appear that “Mald” ever had occasion for, or entertained, the slightest suspicion of the sincerity and good faith of her royal hostess; for even when the dense masses of King Stephen's troops

¹ Monasticon Ang., vol. vi., pt. ii., p. 1110. Monstier's Neustria pia, p. 813.

² Howard Memorials, Append. No. X. Gesta Steph., p. 946.

³ Malmsbury, p. 184.

⁴ Langtoft, vol. i., p. 119.

were planting themselves in every direction around the ramparts, the high-minded Adelicia peremptorily refused to give up her guest; and after some negotiations upon the subject, Stephen consented that the empress should take her departure under a safe escort, and join her brother at Bristol¹. This singular proceeding on the part of the king has excited much surprise, and given rise to many conjectures as to his motives. The probability seems to be that there was more of policy and less of chivalry in this act than is generally attributed to it. Arundel Castle was a strong fortress, and garrisoned by upwards of 120 knights, (for Robert had only taken away twelve of those that sailed to England with him), in addition to the numerous retainers who might be supposed to form the usual guard of Queen Adelicia, all of whom would be inspired with the warmest enthusiasm in defence of their royal inmates; Stephen might therefore well expect that some time would elapse before he could hope to reduce the place; while the interval would be employed by the energetic Earl Robert, in collecting such a numerous body of partisans as would finally compel him in all probability to raise the siege; whereas, by driving the war into Bristol, a corner of the kingdom, he might hope to extinguish it at once. Assuming, then, that the obstacles attending the siege of Arundel Castle formed a strong inducement to the king to adopt this line of conduct, we get rid of two difficulties—that of supposing the Earl of Gloucester, who was a most consummate general, guilty of such an oversight as leaving his sister comparatively unprotected—and that of attributing to the king the romantic generosity or extreme folly of letting his enemy escape out of his hands, when she must otherwise have fallen an easy prey. Huntingdon²

¹ Langtoft, vol. i., p. 119. Gervase, Twysden, p. 1349. Gesta Stephani, p. 947.

² Scriptores post Bedam, p. 389. His words are, "Vel perfida credens consilia, vel quia castrum videbat inexpugnabile, ire permisit ad Bristow."

inclines to this view of the affair, as also does the anonymous author of the *Gesta Stephani Regis*¹.

The Bishop of Winchester, Stephen's brother, by whose counsel, whether given perfidiously or otherwise, it is impossible to determine, this step had been taken, was appointed to convey the empress to Bristol, now rendered impregnable by the exertions of its gallant commander². An unexpected revolt in Ely, headed by Baldwin de Reviers, the rebellious Earl of Devonshire, whom we have formerly named, and the Bishop of Ely, a powerful prelate whom Stephen had recently hugely affronted, gave the king sufficient work elsewhere, and the empress remained unmolested for two months, assuming the state and dignity of a sovereign, as far as circumstances would permit, and receiving the homage of a large number of the neighbouring barons, who flocked to her standard³, after which she removed to Gloucester, where she was received by Milo Fitz Walter, the grand constable of England and governor of the castle, who afterwards was one of her most valued and faithful adherents⁴.

We are now about to enter upon a series of contests, which belong to the province of the historian rather than the biographer, and which are besides so well known to the student of English history, that only such a general outline will be given, as may serve to keep up the connection of the personal history of Matilda.

The winter of 1139 and greater part of the following year were spent in fruitless negotiations and vain attempts to bring about a pacification, in which Stephen's brother, the artful Bishop of Winchester, who held also the important office of cardinal legate, bore a conspicuous part⁵; but the claims of the two parties were utterly irrecon-

¹ p. 947.

² Gervase, ut supra. *Gesta Steph.*, p. 949.

³ Gervase, ut supra.

⁴ *Cont. Flor. Worcester*, p. 672.

⁵ *Malmsbury*, p. 182.

cilable, and neither had as yet learned humility by defeat, so that it was quite impossible to propose any terms which should be accepted by both. The crown of England was the glittering prize which was to reward the successful combatant, and neither was willing to relinquish it without a struggle.

Matilda's principal residence was Gloucester Castle, which, on account of its proximity to the Welch counties, where her brother's main strength lay, was considered a suitable position for her; the mother of Earl Robert was the daughter of Rhees ap Tudor, the last monarch of South Wales, and this connection gave him of course great advantages in that principality¹. In the critical situation in which she felt herself to be placed, the empress submitted to be entirely guided by the counsels of her statesman-like brother, and does not seem even once to have given vent to those displays of temper which afterwards tarnished her character. Her only chance of success consisted in conciliating the favour of the English nobles, by whose faithful adherence, after all, the contest must be decided. The clergy of the kingdom were already much disposed to support her cause, for the quarrels which King Stephen had had with three of his most potent prelates, the Bishops of Ely, Salisbury, and Lincoln, and the harshness with which he had treated them, had served to alienate from him the affections of that powerful and influential body. Matilda indeed felt so secure of their good-will that she offered to submit her cause to their arbitration; but Stephen would not consent to such an arrangement².

In the summer of 1140, the Bishop of Winchester went over to France to try if, by the mediation of Theobald of Blois, his and Stephen's elder brother, and the King of

¹ Malmsbury, p. 182. Sandford's Genealogical History, p. 45.

² Lord Lyttleton, Life of Henry II., vol. i., p. 228. Malmsbury, Hist. Nov., book ii., section 37.

France, the terms of a treaty could be amicably adjusted; but on his return, after several conferences had been held at Bath by the plenipotentiaries of both parties, they broke off just as far from their point as at first, and it became only too evident that arms, and not words, were to end the strife. Stephen's grand object was to obtain possession, if possible, of the person of the empress; and to this end he besieged her and Earl Robert in the castle of Wallingford, whither they had removed; but on the siege being pressed, Matilda found means to retire to Lincoln. Hither she was followed by her energetic cousin, but again escaped, even when the articles of capitulation were on the point of being signed¹, and once more intrenched herself behind the walls of Gloucester Castle; while her brother, with the most persevering activity, exerted his utmost efforts in her favour, and by dint of personal intrepidity and skilful generalship, won for her the famous battle of Lincoln, on the 2nd of February, 1141, in which the brave King Stephen, fighting with the utmost desperation, was taken prisoner².

No important catastrophe ever happened in these ages of marvels, without some fore-token; and on the very morning of the battle, when the king was celebrating mass, it is said that the consecrated wafer fell from the hands of the officiating bishop, and was broken—a certain presage of impending evil³! Stephen was not to be dis-

¹ These two sieges are given on the authority of M. Rapin, whose general correctness entitles him to some trust; but as we have not met with them in the original chroniclers, they must be considered of questionable authenticity.

² Huntingdon, p. 392. Gervase, Twysden, p. 1353. Malmsbury, p. 187.

³ Chron. Norm., p. 979. Robert of Gloucester's account is still more ominous.

“The kyng Stevene, agen thys dede, to holy chyrche drow,
And hys masse hurde first, with devocyon enow.
The byssop of Lincolne hys masse song *tho* (then),
And at that tyme as he wolde to offrynge go,
And hys taper that he offrede, in the byssope's hond do (*place*)
Bodying as it were, the taper berst a-two.

concerted by any sinister omen, and he fought with such lion-like fury on that memorable day, that we are told had there been but one hundred such men in his army, the fate of the battle would have been reversed¹. As it was, however, the gallant monarch, scorning to fly, was overpowered by numbers, and forced to yield himself prisoner; and the triumphant earl returned with all speed to Gloucester, leading the king, a fettered captive, to the feet of his imperial sister².

The workings of the human heart in all its unfathomed recesses, are too deep, too mysterious, to be dealt with by those whose business is with "the hum—the crowd—the shock of men," and none of the busy chroniclers of the time have ventured a surmise as to what were the emotions of the haughty Augusta, when her former companion was thus brought before her; but if aught of tenderness for her gallant cousin was still lingering in Matilda's mind, the feeling must have been more than counterbalanced by the exulting delight occasioned by the extraordinary advantage she had gained in the possession of the person of her rival.

Bristol Castle was the place assigned for the residence of the royal captive. We have the testimony of William of Malmsbury, and several other historians, that his imprisonment, though close, was not at first harsh or rigorous, and that it was not till after the feelings of the empress had been wound up to a high pitch of exasperation, by her subsequent misfortunes, that she was cruel enough to load with irons the cousin whom she had once so tenderly loved³. The empress presently took her departure from

The box eke that hung over the altar, wyth Gode's fless and blod,
The string breke and it fell adown—such sygne was not gode,
Me jugede wat it sholde betoken thys case,
That the kyng sholde be overcome, and al so it was." Vol. ii., p. 456.

¹ Chron. Norm., ut supra.

² Gest. Steph., p. 952. Malmsbury, p. 187. Brompton, pp. 1030-1, and Gervase, p. 1354, Twysden.

³ Chron. Norm., p. 979 B. Huntingdon, p. 392.

Gloucester, accompanied by the Bishop of Ely, and many barons, and proceeded to Cirencester¹, which yielded at once to her arms; and here she kept her first court since the prosperous change in her fortunes. The next point of importance to be gained, was the good will of Stephen's brother, the plotting Bishop of Winchester; and Matilda well knew by what motives she was likely to influence this ambitious prelate. She promised to make him her chief counsellor in all matters of state, and that in ecclesiastical affairs, especially the distribution of the vacant benefices, his will should be supreme². Sunday, the 2nd of March, 1141, was the day appointed for an interview—"a wild and stormy day," says our chronicler, "a fit emblem of the calamities that were to ensue." The place of meeting was a large plain before the city of Winchester, and thither the empress repaired, attended by a gallant train of nobles; for, since the capture of the king, the number of her adherents had increased daily³. Here she was met by the haughty bishop, and the articles of the treaty were duly sworn to, and witnessed by the nobles on both sides; after which, the bishop received her as Queen of England, and swore to be her faithful subject as long as she performed her part of their mutual contract⁴—a significant reservation, which might even thus early have convinced her how cautiously she ought to deal with this new ally.

The following day Matilda was conducted in state to Winchester. On her approach to the city, most of the prelates of England came forth to meet her with all possible magnificence; a band of nobles and knights followed, then came in long procession two convents of monks, and a third of nuns, to welcome with their melodious chanting

¹ Cont. Flor. Worc., p. 676. Brompton, p. 1031, and Gervase, p. 1354, Twysden.

² Malmsbury, pp. 187-8.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., Gesta Stephani, p. 953.

their imperial lady; and, in the pomp of regal dignity, the empress-queen entered the venerable city, and took up her residence in the ancient and stately palace, long the frequent abode of English royalty, where she herself first saw the light, and where she had spent so many of the days of her early childhood¹. Here the regal sceptre and the crown which she was never destined to wear were given to her keeping; she is said to have been greatly delighted with these external symbols of royalty²; and now we are told "she made herself queen of all England, and gloried to be so called³." She caused herself to be immediately proclaimed at the market-place, and then went in solemn procession to the cathedral-church, supported on the right hand by the Bishop of Winchester, who as cardinal-legate was the first prelate in the land; and on the left, by the Bishop of St. David's, the primate of Wales⁴. After high mass had been performed, the legate solemnly bestowed his benediction on the empress and her friends, and denounced the fearful sentence of excommunication against his unfortunate brother and all his adherents.

The only instances in which we have documentary evidence that Matilda styled herself "Queen of England," occur in two charters granted at this period. The first at the request of Henry, Bishop of Winchester, to the Abbey of Glastonbury, confirming all the privileges it held "on the Sunday, the entrance of Lent, when Henry, Bishop of Winchester, came to meet me near Warewell, which preceded the Monday in which I was honourably received by the prelates and citizens in the city and church of Winchester⁵." The other is a con-

¹ Cont. Flor. Worcester, p. 676. Gervase, Twysden, p. 1354.

² Cont. Flor. Worc., ut supra. Ann. Waverley, Gale, vol. ii., p. 155. Gest. Steph., p. 954.

³ Gest. Steph., p. 953, *Rer. Norm. Script. Ant.*

⁴ Malmsbury, p. 188.

⁵ It is twice printed by Hearne, in his edition of John of Glastonbury, Preface, p. xxvii., from a MS. chartulary formerly in the possession of

firmation grant to the monks of her favourite Abbey of Reading¹.

These charters, which are of undoubted authenticity, prove that the empress, in the elation of success, assumed a title which was not then considered as belonging to any but those who had actually worn the crown, and which, after the defeat of her hopes of a speedy coronation, she herself laid aside.

Matilda had now arrived almost at the summit of her hopes; her rival a captive under the curse of the Church, and the nobles and prelates of the land crowding from all sides to do her homage, her progress resembled a triumphal procession. From Winchester she marched to Wilton, where such were the crowds assembled to catch a glimpse of their royal lady, that the gates scarcely sufficed to afford them entrance. Here she received the homage of the Archbishop of Canterbury and others, whose consciences being less unscrupulous than ordinary, to escape the self-condemnation of violated oaths, they had, by her permission, previously visited their former master, King Stephen, and obtained from him that absolution which it was out of his power to refuse²; thence she proceeded to Reading, where, amongst the barons that came to offer their services, was Robert d'Oily, the Governor of Oxford, who agreed to relinquish that ancient and strong city to his imperial mistress. Thither she accordingly repaired, and having been received in due state by the inhabitants, took up her abode there for a short period, and celebrated with queenly splendour the Whitsuntide festival³. Before her de-

Lord Weymouth, and again in the Chronicle of Adam de Domerham, a monk of Glastonbury, who gives the charter at full. Vol. ii., p. 329. Also in the Monasticon Anglicanum, vol. i., p. 44, from one of the Wood MSS.

¹ As this charter has not hitherto appeared in print, it is given in Appendix No. III.

² Cont. Flor. Worc., ut supra.

³ Cont. Flor. Worc., p. 676.

parture she bestowed some lands on the monastery of St. Bennet's Holme in that city¹. She also presented to William de Beauchamp the castle and honour of Tamworth, as well as all the lands and inheritance of his ancestors and kindred, of which they were forfeited for taking arms against her, and which were not to be restored to them for any fine or compensation they might offer, unless they had previously actually served on her side in the war².

Meanwhile, her new ally, Henry of Blois, Bishop of Winchester, assembled a synod in his episcopal city, in which he uttered a long harangue in censure of Stephen's proceedings, enlarging on the obligation of the previous oaths taken to Matilda; and, notwithstanding an eloquent and touching appeal from the unfortunate consort of the imprisoned king³, "Matilda, the daughter of the incomparable King Henry," was elected as "Lady of England and Normandy⁴." Such an unprecedented step as the election of a sovereign by the clergy alone excited great surprise in those members of the council, who had not been previously initiated into its object; but the legate was all-powerful, and singular as the decree was, issuing from such an assembly, it was passed without one dissenting voice.

Nothing now remained but to win over the citizens of London, who still clung to their former monarch, and whose consent was an indispensable pre-requisite to the ceremony of the coronation, about which the empress manifested considerable anxiety; but nearly two months

¹ See register of the monastery, Cotton. MSS., Galba, E. ii., fol. 31. By an odd accident there is preserved among the monastic charters in this volume the celebrated agreement afterwards drawn between Stephen and Henry Fitz-Empress.

² Stapleton's *Rotuli Scaccarii Normanniæ*, Introd., p. xcix.

³ For many interesting particulars respecting Queen Matilda of Boulogne, see her memoir in vol. i. of the *Queens of England*.

⁴ *Acta Consilii Wint.*, Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 28, note. *Malmsbury*, p. 189.

elapsed before this point could be accomplished. In the meantime, Matilda advanced on her way as far as St. Alban's¹, and here she was joined by her uncle, King David of Scotland, who, having, in former years, suffered so severely in supporting her cause, now came to congratulate her on her success, and to take his place as one of the peers of the realm at her approaching coronation.

At length, with a train as numerous and splendid as even the Augusta herself could desire, a few days before Midsummer, she made her entry into the capital of her ancestral kingdom, and was received with enthusiasm by many of the citizens, who welcomed in her the daughter of their idolized queen, Matilda the Atheling, the lawful heiress of their late sovereign, and the descendant of their Saxon monarchs². She fixed her residence in the palace of Westminster, and held her state in the midst of a numerous and brilliant court, while her brother, the Earl of Gloucester, by the courtesy of his manners, secured the good-will of the proud barons, and made great exertions to reform the abuses which had crept into the government during the troublous times of civil war. But he was thwarted in all his efforts by the imperious Domina herself. Ever since the day when her dangerous rival was brought a prisoner to her feet, the temper of Matilda had undergone a decided change; no longer under the pressure of immediate danger, she manifested that hauteur of manner and wayward self-will which, in course of time, alienated from her the affections of her adherents³, and was, humanly speaking, the sole cause of her speedy overthrow; for, as Robert of Gloucester tells us,—

¹ Cont. Flor. Worc., p. 676. Gervase, Twysden, p. 1354. From this place one of her charters in favour of her friend, Milo Fitz-Walter, is dated. Orig. charter, Duchy of Lancaster's Office.

² Chron. Norm., p. 979. Cont. Flor., ut supra. Brompton, Twysden, p. 1031. Gest. Steph., p. 954.

³ Huntingdon, p. 392.

"When the emperesse was in such power broght
So cruel and proud she was, that men might it suffer not¹."

William of Newbridge uses a still stronger expression, "Elevated by recent success," says he, "she foamed in her heart, and thundered in her words, so that, by her intolerable feminine pride, she inflamed the hearts of the yet wavering nobles against her²."

Accustomed, during the earlier period of her life, to the obsequious reverence of an imperial court, Matilda expected similar homage from the sturdy barons whose good swords had just won for her all that she possessed, "and when they bowed to her," we are told, "she did not, as became her, reverently rise in return³." When the former adherents of King Stephen came to pay her their obeisance, she received them with sharp reproaches for their infidelity, or, at best, with restrained coldness; while she injudiciously confiscated the estates of the wavering, and thus converted them into open or secret enemies. Even those to whom she was under the greatest obligations were not secure from the same imperious treatment, and her uncle the Scotch king, her heroic brother the Earl of Gloucester, and the Bishop of Winchester, were all made to suffer from the ebullitions of her passion⁴.

It was scarcely to be expected that her unfortunate cousin, Queen Matilda, should meet with more consideration; this amiable woman made the most boundless concessions, in order to obtain the liberty of the king her husband. His crown and sceptre were to be renounced, both for himself and his heirs, and to avoid all fear of future disturbance, he even consented to assume the cowl, and take upon himself the monastic vows⁵; but in spite

¹ Vol. ii., p. 461.

² Hearne's Newbridge, vol. i., p. 40.

³ Gesta Stephani Regis, p. 954.

⁴ Ibid. John Hagulstad, Twysden, p. 270.

⁵ Hearne's Sprott's Chron., p. 116.

of the passionate entreaties of the weeping queen, the self-willed Matilda rudely repulsed her from her presence, with a positive refusal of her request¹. It was in a woeful hour for the haughty empress, that she thus drove to desperation her gentle but noble-spirited cousin—for the queen was thus compelled to that course of strenuous and persevering resistance which never ceased till Matilda was hurled from her tottering throne.

From the time of her first landing in England, the exchequer of the empress had been at a miserably low ebb, so low, indeed, that the very equipments of her household, and provisions for her table were provided by the zeal of her faithful friend, Milo Fitz-Walter². Anxious to replenish her empty coffers, she opened her first direct communications with the City of London, by the demand of an enormous subsidy. This step, though pressed upon her by imperious necessity, was highly injudicious. The citizens, who had already been sadly drained by their contributions to the cause of the imprisoned Stephen, begged for pity, or at least for a little delay. "The king has left us nothing," said the deputies in a humble tone. "I understand you have given all to my enemy, to strengthen him against me," was the haughty reply; "you have conspired for my ruin, therefore I will neither spare you, nor relax the least in my demand of money³." Not being able to obtain the respite they desired, the deputies ventured to beseech that she would govern them by the gentle rule of her Saxon ancestor, Edward the Confessor, and not by the stern laws of her father and grandfather. Matilda's Norman blood boiled within her at these words; with frowning brow, and eyes flashing with passionate indignation, she fiercely reproached their insolence, and

¹ Brompton, Twysden, p. 1031. Cont. Flor. Worc., p. 677. Gervase, p. 1355. Gest. Steph., p. 954.

² Cont. Flor. Worc. p. 677. Gervase, ut supra.

³ Gest. Steph., p. 954.

bidding them go home and collect their subsidy, drove them from her presence¹. And they *did* retire, but it was not to their homes. The citizens, assembled to hear the report of their messengers, were provoked beyond measure at the relation of the harshness with which they had been treated by the empress; the secret emissaries of Stephen's queen had already been busy among them, and their resolutions were soon taken. While the Augusta was giving a splendid banquet to her court at her royal palace of Westminster, and in anticipation dreaming over the ceremonials of her approaching coronation, the mirth of the festival was broken in upon by the arrival of a secret messenger, bearing the fearful tidings, that the city was up in arms². "To horse, to horse!" was the instantaneous cry, and in a few minutes the empress and her nobles were mounted and ready; but not before the pealing of the alarm-bells from every church in the city, the clang of arms, and the mustering of the troops showed that no time was to be lost; and scarcely had her train got clear of the palace, when the mob entered and took possession, and all the furniture and plate became their prey. The band of stalwart knights who accompanied the empress in her flight presented too formidable an appearance for the citizen soldiers to attempt a pursuit; one by one, however, Matilda's followers dropped away, and her faithful brother, the Earl of Gloucester, with Milo Fitz-Walter, were the only nobles who entered with her the city of Oxford, which she had chosen as the place of her retreat³, although she was speedily joined by her uncle, King David, and the Bishop of Winchester. She continued to retire as far as Gloucester, but by the advice of her counsellors, especially Milo, she consented to return

¹ Brompton, Twysden, p. 1031. Cont. Flor. Worc., ut supra. Knighton, p. 2387, Twysden.

² Ibid. Gest. Steph., p. 955.

³ Cont. Flor. Worc., ut supra. Gervase, p. 1355, and Knighton, p. 2387, Twysden. Saxon Annals, p. 242. Gest. Steph., p. 955.

to Oxford, as being a more central situation for the re-assembling of her scattered partisans. The better to secure the attachment of the inhabitants, she followed the example of King Stephen, in the bestowment of liberal grants of lands to the Church of St. Frideswide's, now Christ's Church, Oxford; three charters of these grants are still extant, in which she requests the prayers of the monks for the soul of her father, King Henry, for her own health and that of her son, and for the stability of her kingdom¹. At this time, too, she rewarded the services of her trusty friend, Milo Fitz-Walter, by conferring upon him the Earldom of Hereford, with all the Forest of Dean²; to which she afterwards added the Castle of Abergavenny, "given at the intercession of Brian Fitz-Count, and his wife Matilda of Wallingford³."

Matilda was the first sovereign who created earls by means of charters, instead of bestowing upon them the usual "belt of earldom." Geoffrey Mandeville, Earl of Essex, was the first thus installed, and the charter of his creation is still in existence⁴. That by which she conferred upon him all his ancestral possessions, together with the custody of the Tower of London, and many other privileges, is also preserved, and it bears this striking peculiarity, that in it she associates the name of her husband, Geoffrey Plantagenet, with her own. The reason of this seems to be that she grants to the earl some lands in Normandy, of which province Geoffrey was then regent. One of the provisions of the charter is singular. Matilda pledges herself that neither she, nor Earl Geoffrey, nor their children will make peace with the citizens of London

¹ Monast. Ang., vol. ii., pp. 145-6.

² Rymer's Fœdera, new edit., vol. i., pt. i., p. 14. Dugdale's Baronage, vol. i., p. 537.

³ Original charter, in Duchy of Lancaster's Office.

⁴ Preface to Dugdale's Baronage.

without the consent of the Earl of Essex, to whom they were mortal enemies¹.

The style adopted by Matilda in these charters, as in most other of her public documents, is "Matilda the Empress, daughter of King Henry, and Lady of the English." The fact that the empress was never crowned in England, is sufficient to account for this peculiarity of title²; not one of our early sovereigns formally adopted the regal title, previously to their coronation; nor, with the exception of the instances above alluded to, did Matilda ever appropriate the long-coveted appellation of Queen. It is true, that on the seal of this Princess, her brow is encircled by a diadem and she bears a sceptre in her right hand, but the inscription which is simply "Romanorum Regina Macthildis," proves that this was the seal she used as Empress of Germany, and that it was struck before she asserted her pretensions to the English crown³; nor is any seal of hers, bearing reference to her rights as "Queen," or even "Lady of England," known to have ever existed.

¹ As this charter has never appeared in print, it is inserted in the Appendix, No. IV. It will be observed that Matilda writes in the singular number, the regal plural not yet being in vogue. For a lucid analysis of both these charters see Dugdale's Baronage, vol. i., pp. 201-2.

² See a paper in the Archæologia, vol. xxvii., p. 107, by W. Hardy, Esq., in which a charter of King Richard I. is quoted, from which it appears that he merely styled himself "Dominus Angliæ," previous to his coronation.

³ Tyrrel tells us that he has seen a drawing made from the seal which was appended to a deed confirming the grants of Baldwin de Reviers, Earl of Devonshire, to the Cluniac priory of St. James at Exeter in 1146, which bore the inscription, "Macthildis Regina Romanorum, et *Domina Anglorum*." History of England, vol. ii., p. 246. This deed is preserved in the muniment room of the library of St. John's College, Cambridge, but having procured an inspection to be made of the seal, we have ascertained that it is precisely similar to the one already described, and that the words "Domina Anglorum" do *not* occur in the legend. Other seals of the empress are to be found in the Duchy of Lancaster's Office, and elsewhere, but they resemble in all material points the one engraved in Sandford, Vincent, and Speed. The frontispiece of this volume is taken from a cast of a seal among the Durham archives, kindly executed for the purpose by Mr. John Doubleday, the medallist. We have the

During her sojourn in Oxford, Matilda contrived to give mortal offence to one of the most important of her recent adherents, Henry, Bishop of Winchester. This prelate demanded from her, on behalf of his disinherited nephew, Prince Eustace, King Stephen's eldest son, the earldom of Boulogne, of which in fact she had no authority to deprive him, as it was a continental possession, inherited exclusively in right of his mother, Matilda of Boulogne, and also that of Mortagne, which had been given to Stephen by Henry I. An earl's coronet was but a small boon to ask in exchange for a prospective crown; yet trifling as it was, the empress refused to grant it; and, by this act, so offended the arrogant prelate, who had condescended to become her suppliant, that he declined to accept the repeated invitations she sent him to appear at court, and retired in high dudgeon to his episcopal city of Winchester, the castle of which he strongly fortified¹. Nor was this all; he immediately opened a correspondence with his hapless sister-in-law, Queen Matilda, and publicly excommunicated the followers of his late mistress. Alarmed at the consequences of her own indiscretion, Matilda sent her brother to the bishop to endeavour to repair the breach; but his efforts at conciliation were altogether fruitless: and the empress now attempted to make amends for one act of rashness by the perpetration of another. Without consulting her soldier brother, who was then absent, or any of her prudent advisers, she assembled the troops under her immediate command, and marched forthwith to Winchester with the intention of seizing the bishop by surprise²; but the wily

authority of this experienced gentleman for affirming that but one *matrix* of Matilda's seal is really ascertained to have ever existed. Several drawings have been made with some differences, but these have been the effect of imagination in the designer, working under the disadvantage of partially obliterated impressions.

¹ Malmsbury, p. 190. Cont. Flor. Worc., p. 677.

² Ibid. Gest. Steph., p. 953.

legate was not to be so easily taken in. On approaching the city with her forces, Matilda sent to invite him to her presence; but Henry of Blois knew better than to trust himself in such companionship, and only sending the ambiguous reply, "Ego parabo me,"—"I will prepare myself¹," fulfilled his promise by retiring out of one of the city gates as the empress entered the other, and shutting himself up in his castle. Determined not to be thwarted, Matilda immediately laid siege to that stronghold² with such troops as she had in readiness, and summoned all her partisans from far and wide, to assemble around her standard. Her uncle, King David, and several of the nobility obeyed her call, and joined her at the royal palace of Winchester, where she had taken up her abode; as also did the noble-minded Earl Robert, whom no neglect or perverseness on the part of his sister could provoke to swerve from his steadfast fidelity; and many others followed their example³. Some of the English nobles, however, had already joined the rallying host, still kept on foot by the wife of the imprisoned king; they obeyed the summons and marched to Winchester, it is true, but it was in the ranks of her assailants; and their accumulating forces pressing around the walls of the ancient city, the imperial Augusta herself was besieged in turn within her own palace. The position of the citizens was miserable in the extreme; they were attacked from without by the beleaguering hosts of the enemy, who blocked up the avenues so closely that no provisions could be thrown into the city; while from the castle, where the bishop had secured himself, a frequent discharge of fiery missiles was kept up against them⁴. The worldly-minded prelate preferred running the risk of reducing part of the capital of

¹ Malmsbury, p. 190.

² Matt. Westm., book ii., p. 37. Gest. Steph., p. 955.

³ Gest. Steph., p. 956.

⁴ Ibid.

his episcopal see to ashes, rather than leave any weapon in his power unwielded against his antagonist. He incurred severe and just censure by this unmerciful mode of proceeding; though it must be acknowledged that the destruction of forty churches, which fell before the flames kindled by his missiles, excited the indignation of the monkish chroniclers far more powerfully than the sufferings of the wretched inhabitants¹. Among these churches was that of St. Grimbold, in which was preserved a magnificent cross, the gift of the Danish king, Canute, which was made of gold, and splendidly adorned with the most costly gems. This cross was supposed to be endowed with some sacred and mysterious power; and on the approach of the conflagration, we are informed that in presence of the distracted brethren, it began to tremble and turn black; and the moment the flames reached it, three tremendous peals of thunder vibrating through the vaulted arches, shewed the horror with which the very elements were inspired at so nefarious a deed².

Week after week rolled away, and still the distress of the unfortunate Matilda continued to increase; famine and fire within, and the sword without, were daily thinning her ranks, and she began sensibly to feel the ill effects of the alienation she had wrought in the minds of the nobles. But a short time ago, the whole of England, excepting the county of Kent, had owned her sway³; and now in her hour of need, with the troops of Queen Matilda thundering at the gates, not one, saving the few faithful friends who were with her in the city, armed in her defence, and not the slightest attempt was made to raise the siege. To crown her misfortunes, a convoy of provisions which was on its way to relieve her pressing necessities, was intercepted by William d'Ypres, the energetic

¹ Cont. Flor. Worc., p. 677.

² Cont. Flor. Worc., ut supra.

³ Chron. Norm., p. 979.

general of Stephen's queen¹: and to such an extremity were the inhabitants reduced, that the empress herself remained several days almost without food. The dread of falling into the hands of the enemy now overcame the reluctance of the proud Augusta to fly before the army of her once despised cousin, and her resolution was taken to leave the city².

Availing himself of a truce proclaimed on the 14th of September, the feast of the Holy Cross, by the bishop, Earl Robert made preparations for the escape of his sister; sending her forward under the charge of another of her natural brothers, Reginald, Earl of Cornwall³, he himself remained at the head of a strong rear-guard to cover the retreat. This movement was totally unexpected by the enemy; but no sooner had the enraged bishop perceived that his prize was eluding his grasp, than he ordered his troops instantly to follow her. A strong barrier was, however, placed between him and the object of his pursuit in the devoted fidelity and noble self-devotion of her brave brother, who, aware of the importance of gaining time, opposed so stout a resistance to the advancing columns of the enemy, that he himself was at last overwhelmed by numbers, and taken prisoner⁴. His gallant conduct had, nevertheless, secured the safety of the empress; she and her train rode, without once drawing bridle, till they reached the castle of Ludgershall, and, after resting only a few hours, they remounted, and rode as fast as the failing strength of Matilda would permit, to Devizes. But the danger was not over; the resistance presented by the Earl of Gloucester had been broken through, and scattered bands of the royal troops began to appear on the roads. The empress, overwhelmed with terror at the idea of

¹ John Hagulstadt, Twysden, p. 270.

² Saxon Annals, p. 242.

³ Cont. Flor. Worc., p. 677. Gervase, Twysden, p. 1356.

⁴ Chron. Norm., p. 979. Saxon Annals, p. 242. Gest. Steph., p. 957.

being captured by her enemies, and too much exhausted with fatigue and fasting, to be able again to mount her horse, laid aside her imperial robes, and, putting on a muffler and winding-sheet, was placed in a coffin¹, and then, elevated upon a bier, was borne on the shoulders of her trusty servants, unnoticed and unsuspected, to Gloucester; and, robed in the garb of death, herself more dead than alive, the Empress Augusta re-entered the castle which she had left a few months before with such brilliant expectations².

During the late *mêlée*, the King of Scots had been in imminent peril, having been several times taken captive, and only rescued by the devoted gallantry of his followers; and, weary of fighting in the service of his imperious niece, he retired back to his own dominions³. But the greatest loss the empress sustained was the captivity of her brother, the Earl of Gloucester; this nobleman was the soul of her party, the leader of her armies, and the head of her council. Queen Matilda, who well knew the value of the prize she had obtained, would only consent to his liberation, on condition that her long-imprisoned lord, King Stephen, should be restored to her in exchange. But the gallant earl himself refused his liberty on such terms, pleading the inequality of rank between the two captives. No effort was neglected, on the part of the queen, to persuade Earl Robert, by the most alluring prospects of office and elevation, to abandon his sister, and join the now rising cause of King Stephen; but her proposals were indignantly rejected: he pleaded his fidelity,

¹ This circumstance is not mentioned by several of the contemporary historians; but the fact of its being related by the anonymous author of the continuation of Florence of Worcester's Chronicle, who is very minute in his details concerning Matilda, and tells us he derived his information from the lips of Earl Milo, one of her most constant adherents, places it on good authority.

² Cont. Flor. Worc., p. 678. Gervase, p. 1356. Knighton, p. 2387. Brompton, p. 1032, Twysden. Gest. Steph., p. 958.

³ Sim. Dun., Twysden, p. 270. Gest. Steph., p. 957.

his honour, and his oaths, and against these all allurements proved fruitless. Threats were next resorted to, and, intent upon the deliverance of her captive spouse, the queen threatened to have him shut up for life in one of her prisons at Boulogne, if he did not consent to receive his freedom in exchange for that of the king; but still the earl swerved not¹. More than a month elapsed, during which the negotiations were still protracted, until at last the empress herself, feeling her utter inability to keep her party together, without the powerful influence of her brother, after having in vain offered twelve nobles who had been taken captive by her party, and a large sum of money as his ransom, induced him to agree to the terms proposed by the queen.

On the 1st of November, Stephen, after a captivity of nine months, rejoined his faithful consort, and Robert returned to his imperial sister at Gloucester².

Shortly afterwards Henry of Blois assembled another synod at Winchester, the object of which was completely to undo what had been done in the preceding one. The "Countess of Anjou," as she was now styled, and her followers were solemnly excommunicated, and Stephen restored to his forfeited honours,—a memorable instance of tergiversation, and yet but one of the many that were committed by this time-serving prelate. It is true that a messenger, despatched by the empress, boldly and openly exclaimed against this breach of the oaths so recently sworn, even reproaching the legate with having been the first to summon Matilda to England, but his remonstrances were as little regarded now, as, on the former assembly, had been those of the chaplain of Queen Matilda³.

Meanwhile the liberation of the king had given a

¹ Malmsbury, p. 190-1.

² Ibid. Gest. Steph., p. 957. Chron. Norm., p. 979.

³ Malmsb., p. 191. Lord Lyttleton, vol. i., p. 260.

fresh impulse to the royal party; admiration of the virtues of his heroic queen, and, still more, dislike to the Norman Domina, "who presumed to lord it over them so haughtily," prevailed among the nobles, and Stephen's cause began once more to assume the ascendant. Both sides remained quiet during the winter; and shut up in her castle of Gloucester, with but few attendants, the empress had ample space to ruminate on the past, as well as to speculate on the future. About the time of Lent she removed to the castle of Devizes, and assembled a council of her friends to consult about the preparations for the ensuing campaign. Feeling themselves unable to cope alone with King Stephen, it was determined that the Earl of Anjou should be applied to for assistance¹. Messengers were accordingly sent over to summon him, but he absolutely refused to treat with any one, saving the Earl of Gloucester himself. Robert was very unwilling to leave England on such an embassy; for the channel was so well guarded by Stephen's vessels, that he ran imminent danger of capture: but what touched him far more sensibly was the idea of leaving his sister exposed to the perils of war, without the shelter of his protecting arm². He did at length consent to undertake the voyage, on condition that the principal nobles of his sister's party would give hostages for their fidelity, who might accompany him, thus proving how well he was aware of the slight tenure on which the allegiance of those haughty barons was held³. But though Earl Robert thus braved the perils of the sea, in order to gratify the wishes of the Plantagenet earl, he did not succeed in accomplishing the main object of his mission. Although Geoffry had been separated for three years from his wife, he manifested not the slightest desire to rejoin her, and urged the dis-

¹ Malmsbury, p. 193.

² Ibid.

³ Chron. Norm., p. 979. Rob. de Monte, Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 289.

turbed state of Normandy as his excuse for not lending her any aid. When this plea was neutralized by the vigorous efforts of Earl Robert in assisting him to subdue the rebel castles there, still one pretext after another was found for delay¹. In truth, Earl Geoffry appears to have had little inclination to live as a subject under the authority of his turbulent consort, and had no hope of being allowed to share her crown, even should he assist in winning it. He consented, however, at the earnest solicitation of the earl, to send over his eldest son Henry, the young heir of England, then a handsome boy in his tenth year, and accompanied by this precious pledge, and a strong body of Angevin troops, Robert took his departure for England². But disastrous news awaited him; the good fortune of his sister seemed to be chained to his banners, and no sooner had he left her, than a train of fresh misfortunes ensued. The king had exerted himself to the utmost to take advantage of the absence of his formidable antagonist; he advanced towards the south, taking all the fortresses in his way, until he appeared, on the 26th of September, before the walls of Oxford, in which strong city the empress had been placed for security by her provident brother³.

Heedless and unalarmed, Matilda and her friends witnessed the approach of Stephen's army. With all but impregnable walls⁴, and a wide river between them and the foe, they were rather disposed to laugh at what they considered the folly of any attempt at assault. But they were soon roused from their dream of fancied security, when the brave king, at the head of his troops, plunged

¹ Chron. Norm., p. 980.

² Ibid. Rob. de Monte, ut supra.

³ Malmsbury, p. 194. Gervase, Twysden, p. 1358. Gest. Steph., p. 958.

⁴ The walls were in some places ten feet thick, as may be seen in that part of the tower which still remains, and is used as the county prison. Buck's Antiquities of England and Wales, vol. ii., p. 3. King's Vestiges of Oxford Castle, pp. 14, 24, et seq.

into the stream, dashed across, and commenced a precipitate and vigorous attack upon the town, driving the forces of the empress before him in every direction. Matilda had scarcely time to retire within the castle walls, before the city was fired in many places, and completely occupied by the enemy's troops, who forthwith laid siege to the castle¹.

Most precarious was now the situation of the empress; with but few men at her command, wholly unprepared for a siege, and yet beleaguered on every side by the hosts of that cousin to whom, a few months before, she had even denied the monkish cowl, as too high a boon. The nobles of her party, who had pledged themselves to the Earl of Gloucester for her safety, assembled at Wallingford, and tried by menacing manœuvres to draw Stephen from the covert of his walls, to a fair contest on an open field², but the king was too prudent to be thus ensnared; no coup-de-main, such as that by which Stephen had won the city, would be again likely to succeed, had the barons courage to venture upon it; and as the city was well stored with provisions, they did not attempt a blockade. At this critical moment, Earl Robert and Prince Henry landed at Wareham, with three or four hundred knights. On learning the state of affairs, Robert endeavoured, by besieging Wareham, and making the most vigorous hostile demonstrations, to draw the king from Oxford, but all to no purpose³. Within the frowning battlements of that castle was the rival of his throne, and Stephen resolved that nothing should compel him to rise from before its walls, till the Domina herself was in his power. The heart of the empress sunk within her, as day after day passed away, and she saw the utter hopelessness of any attempt at relief; but, with a spirit rising in proportion to her difficulties, she determined to die rather than surrender.

¹ Gest. Steph., p. 959.

² Malmsbury, p. 194.

³ Ibid. Gervase, Twysden, p. 1358. Gest. Steph., p. 959.

"The lady had defaute
 Bothe of mete and drink
 And she drad their assaute,
 Hunger was at the brink.
 She asked her conseile
 What was thereof to *rede* (say)
 'Steven will us travaile
 And *komen us to dede*' (bring us to death)
 None ne cold ne wold
 Conseile on no partie
 Bot the casteile to yield
 And ask the kyng mercie.
 That ne wold she not,
Hir herte was so stoute
 Bot here now how she wrought,
 And how she passed out¹."

The tale of Matilda's escape from Oxford Castle is so marvellous that, were it not attested by the indubitable evidence of all the contemporary chroniclers, it would be scarcely credible, even though her previous narrow escapes from Arundel, London, and Winchester have familiarized us with the wonderful in her history. Summoning all her resolution, she determined on making one daring and desperate effort for deliverance; it was now winter, and the cold was so piercing, that the waters of the Isis were entirely frozen over, and the ground covered with snow. Of this fortunate circumstance, the empress availed herself. Silently, and at dead of night, she, with three knights² of her train, all arrayed in white habiliments, were let down by cables from the giddy heights of the castle³, and at the base were joined by one of King Stephen's soldiers, whom they had secretly gained over. Gliding along, phantom-like, with noiseless footsteps, amidst the drifted snow, from which their white garments rendered them scarcely distinguishable, they wound their way amidst the tents of the royal troops who were en-

¹ Piers de Langtoft, Rob. le Brune's translation, vol. i., p. 122.

² Or five, according to the Chronicle of Christ's Church, Canterbury, Harl. MS., No. 636, f. 105 b.

³ Saxon Annals, p. 243.

camped on the banks of the river¹; now and then the stillness of the night was broken by the clangour of the horns, or the loud clear voices of the sentinels on duty, challenging and replying², every tone of which must have vibrated through the very hearts of the fugitives, who were thus traversing the ranks of their deadliest foes. Unmarked and unmolested they passed on, the frozen river presenting no obstacle to their progress; and after a long and weary march of six miles, but ill protected from the extreme cold by their slender coverings³, they reached in safety the town of Abingdon; and without pausing a moment to recruit, took horse and rode full speed to the Castle of Wallingford. The contemporary author of the *Gesta Stephani* considers this escape as clearly miraculous, and hesitates whether to consider it as a judgment upon the nation, whose miseries were thus to be increased by a continuation of the horrors of civil war, or rather as a mark of special grace to the empress herself, that by her future conduct she might bring glory to God. In this latter view of the case we would choose to concur, since some passages in Matilda's later history leave room for the hope that her many misfortunes had not been without a beneficial effect upon her mind.

After the failure of his attempt to divert Stephen from the siege of Oxford, Earl Robert had summoned the few nobles who still remained faithful to the empress in her disasters, to a meeting at Cirencester, with the resolution to undertake, as a last resource, the almost hopeless task of compelling the king by force of arms to raise the siege. Here, however, he received the unexpected and joyful news of his sister's escape, and immediately set off,

¹ *Gesta Stephani*, p. 959. Knighton, p. 2387. Gervase, p. 1358. Brompton, p. 1032. J. Hagulstadt, p. 274, Twysden. Wm. of Newbridge, Hearne's edit., vol. i., p. 42. Huntingdon, p. 393.

² *Gesta Stephani*, p. 959.

³ Piers de Langtoft tells us that Matilda "gaed out in her smok, without kirtle or kemse!" p. 122.

accompanied by the young prince his nephew, to Wallingford, to join her¹.

Years fraught with important and varied events had elapsed since the mother and son parted; and it was in a season of woe and dread, that they now met again; but the past, with its toils and its fears, the future with its dangers—all, all was forgotten, as the empress once more clasped the princely boy in her arms, and in the overwhelming emotions of a mother's love received ample compensation for the sufferings she had endured². Unwilling to expose this darling child to the hazards which he would necessarily incur by remaining with her, she gave him in charge to his noble uncle, by whom he was sent to the Castle of Bristol. Here he was placed under the immediate care of a certain learned tutor called Matthew, "to be instructed in letters, and good and civil manners," but subject to the frequent surveillance of his accomplished uncle³.

Earl Robert was well fitted in every respect for the office of guardian and instructor; for he was a decided patron of literature⁴. Geoffry of Monmouth and William of Malmsbury both dedicated their Histories to him; and he caused a translation to be made from the earlier historians of the British kings, as we are informed by Gaimar⁵, probably for the use of his nephew.

¹ Gervase, Twysden, p. 1358. Malmsbury, pp. 194-5.

² Gervase, ut supra.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Qui plenâ societate litterarum scientiam combiberat. Rudborne's Chron., Lambeth MS. 183, fol. 206.

⁵ Chronique des Reys Engles, Royal MS., 13 A., xxi., fol. 147 b. The conclusion of the history of this troubadour bard, where he gives an account of his literary labours and obligations to Earl Robert and others, especially to his "lady Constance," is curious enough to deserve insertion:—

"Ceste estorie fist translater
 Dame Cnstance la gentil;
 Gaimar i mist Mars e Averil
 E tuz les dusze Mais
 Ainz k'il eust translaté des reis.

It would be a fruitless and wearisome task to recount all the skirmishes, the sieges, the marchings and counter-marchings, which took place during the few ensuing years, especially as the empress herself was not again involved in active warfare. The only instance in which her personal interference is recorded occurs in reference to a knight named Walter, Governor of the Castle of Malmsbury, who having fallen into the hands of her party, was brought before her. She used first entreaties, and then the most fearful threats, to induce him to yield the castle; and on his persevering refusal to betray his trust, had the cruelty to throw him into a squalid prison, loaded with irons¹. Her brother, the Earl of Gloucester, was still the leader of her armies; and all that skill and courage could perform, he accomplished; but in spite of his most strenuous efforts, the cause of Matilda was on the decline. Not all his remonstrances could prevail with her to adopt a more courteous demeanour; and the rigour with which she treated those of her own party who were unlucky enough to incur her resentment, as well as such of the king's adherents as fell into her hands, continued to alienate the affections of the barons. The earl still maintained a firm

Il purchasa maint examplaire
 Liveires engleis et par gramaire,
 E en romanz e en Latin,
 Ainz k'en faist traire a la fin
 Si sa dame ne li aidast,
 Ja a mil jour ne l'achivast
 Ele enveiad a Helmeslac
 Pur le livre Walter Espac:
Robert li quens de Gloucestre
Fist translater icele geste
Solun les liveres as Waleis
Kil aveient des Bretons Reis,
 Walter Espec la demandat,
 Li quens Robert li enveiat;
 Puis la prestat Walter Espec,
 E Raul le fiz gileberc.
 Dame Cnstance l'empruntat,
 De son seignor kele mult amat."

¹ Gest. Steph., p. 967.

front: and though his counsels were often slighted, and he himself exposed to the violence of his sister's temper, yet never even for a moment did he swerve from his long-tried fidelity.

The residence of Matilda at this period is uncertain. She spent some time at Devizes, from which place one of her charters is dated, in which she associates the name of her son with her own, in the grant of the whole of the land and earldom of Hereford, with the office of Steward of England, to Humphrey de Bohun, the son of her faithful but lately deceased friend, Earl Milo¹. But her principal place of abode seems to have been the castle of Gloucester, which, besides its strength, possessed the additional advantage of close vicinity to the abode of her son.

In the year 1146, Earl Geoffry, weary of the long absence of his young heir, and perhaps unwilling that during the years when the susceptibilities are most keenly awake, and the mind most easily moulded, he should be so entirely under the influence of his imperial mother, sent a special embassy, consisting of several trustworthy knights and servants, to escort Henry back to Anjou; entreating, perhaps in order to make sure of his object, that even supposing the return of the prince to England should be considered indispensable, he might at least be spared for a short time. Matilda's failing fortunes rendered her not unwilling thus to secure his safety; and the Earl of Gloucester accompanied his nephew to Wareham, from whence he set sail for Normandy², where he was received "in a solemn procession with great delight³." His departure gave but too plain an intimation

¹ The original is in the Duchy of Lancaster's Office. In the Cartulary of Bayeux is also preserved a charter, dated September, 1146, from Devizes, by which Robert, Earl of Gloucester, grants some privileges to the Bishop of Bayeux, and which is said to be executed "in presence of Matilda the empress." Stapleton's *Rotuli Scaccarii Normanniæ*, Introd., p. lxx.

² Gervase, Twysden, pp. 1361-2. Chron. Norm., p. 982.

³ Rob. de Monte, Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 291.

of the discouragement which was felt even by the immediate friends of the empress, with reference to the state of her affairs. Shortly after this she removed to Oxford, as appears from a monastic charter of confirmation dated from that place¹. Matilda certainly was a very liberal supporter of the monks during her residence in England, particularly those of the Cistercian Order, which she patronized in an especial manner. The hospital of St. Nicholas at York², Bardesley Abbey, Worcestershire³, Radnor Abbey and Stoneley Priory, Warwickshire⁴, and Stanley Abbey, Wiltshire⁵, owed their foundation either wholly or in part to her; and charters of her gifts to the monasteries of Glastonbury⁶, St. James' at Exeter⁷, and many of inferior note⁸, are still extant; but unfortunately, most of them are without the dates, which would, if inserted, have enabled us to trace Matilda's progress in England more accurately. Although, in several of these charters, affectionate mention is made of her father and her sons, yet the name of her unloved spouse, Geoffry Plantagenet, never once occurs.

The following year, 1147, was marked by an event which put a final period to Matilda's hope of empire in England. This was the death of her brother Robert, Earl of Gloucester, which is said to have been accelerated, if not occasioned, by his grief for the disasters of his sister⁹. We are not told whether the empress was present at the closing scene of this faithful and devoted brother's life; but she was well aware that the loss she sustained in him was irretrievable; and scarcely had his

¹ *Monasticon Ang.*, vol. vi., p. 709.

² *Ibid.*, vol. v., p. 446.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. v., p. 409.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. v., pp. 443 and 646.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 563.

⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. i., p. 44.

⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. v., p. 107.

⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. ii., p. 146, vol. iii., pp. 20 and 87.

⁹ Gervase, Twysden, p. 1362.

funeral obsequies been performed, than, despairing of success, and weary of the hopeless struggle, Matilda left the shores of England, and took her departure for Normandy¹.

During her long absence, the Earl of Anjou had not been idle; with equal spirit and perseverance he asserted the claims of his wife, or rather his own on her behalf, to the dukedom of Normandy, and so successfully, that in 1144, after a long struggle in which he encountered many fluctuations of fortune, he was at length, on the 19th of January, received into Rouen, and acknowledged through the whole province as rightful duke², and continued to maintain possession of the duchy, though not without occasional disturbances. On the return of the empress, after an absence of eight years, she was received with kindness by her husband³; at length her haughty spirit seems to have been completely broken by misfortune; and were no other details of Matilda in existence than those which record the latter years of her life, our estimate of her character would have been far from unfavourable. With her last glimpse of the white cliffs of England, all her ambition for rule appears to have passed away; without uneasiness, she permitted her husband to retain the government of the province which he held in her right. She had now but one aim, one object in existence, and that was to promote the welfare of her passionately cherished son, Prince Henry, and to him she formally resigned all claims upon the crown, which she well knew was never to glitter on her own brows.

Young Henry was now rising into manhood; his mili-

¹ Gervase, Twysden, p. 1363. Earl Robert was buried at St. James' Church, Bristol, which he had founded. A portrait of him still adorns one of the richly-stained windows on the south side of the choir in the abbey church of Tewksbury. Carter's *Ancient Sculpture and Painting*, vol. ii., p. 24.

² Gervase, p. 1350. Chron. St. Alb. Andegav., p. 481, Ord. Vit., p. 747, Bouquet, vol. xii. Chron. St. Mich., p. 349, and Chron Rotom., p. 368, Labbæus, *Bibliotheca MSS.*, vol. i.

³ Lord Lyttleton, *Life of Henry II.*, vol. i., p. 345.

tary training, under his gallant uncle and father, had early inured him to the use of arms, while he had been imbued by his mother with those high principles of unflinching firmness in the hour of danger, and steady perseverance in the midst of difficulties, which were so valuable to him in his after life.

It was evident that Henry, in any attempt he might project upon the crown of England, would have many advantages which had not been enjoyed by the empress, both in regard to his sex, and the prepossessions already strongly existing in his favour in the minds of the English. Of this fact no one was more fully aware than himself, and already he burned with impatience to claim his ancestral inheritance¹. Matilda put no restraint on desires so accordant with her own wishes, and, with many tremblings and many hopes, she dispatched him, attended by a choice body of troops, to risk his fortunes in the land where she had suffered so much². He sailed in the month of May, 1149. Meanwhile, Matilda, with her husband and two younger sons, remained in Normandy, holding their court at Rouen; here they were visited by Matilda's cousin, Theobald, the great Earl of Blois, who, during his stay, conferred upon her son Geoffry the honour of knighthood, with all the customary pomp³.

In January, 1150, Henry returned home, after an expedition which, notwithstanding the warm reception and assistance given him by King David of Scotland, who performed the important ceremony of knighting him, proved unsuccessful, from the failure of co-operation in some of the English nobles⁴. To compensate for his disappointment, Matilda and Geoffry agreed to resign

¹ Tindal's *Rapin*, vol. i., p. 209.

² Gervase, *Twysden*, p. 1356.

³ *Chron. Norm.*, p. 984, *Ex Orig. Comit. Andeg.*, p. 536, *Bouquet*, vol. xii.

⁴ *Huntingdon*, p. 591.

into the hands of their son the dukedom of Normandy¹, reserving only Argenton, which was one of the dowry possessions of the empress². The court of Rouen, at this period, presented a pleasing picture of domestic union; the ducal coronet, so often the subject of deadly strife even between father and son, was cheerfully yielded on the one side and worn with graceful submissiveness on the other; and it should not be forgotten that the once power-loving Augusta was the first to make the necessary sacrifices. Notwithstanding her actual relinquishment of title, Matilda was still, both before and after this period, treated with great respect, and had considerable influence in the regulation of the affairs of the duchy; this is apparent from the association of her name with that of her husband or son, in the official letters of Archbishop Suger, with whom she and Geoffry seem to have been on very friendly terms³.

One important point yet remained to be gained, in order to complete the arrangements for the transfer of the duchy, and that was the sanction of the King of France, as lord paramount, to Henry's investiture. As Louis had already bestowed it upon Prince Eustace, the son of Stephen, to whom, in 1140, he had given his sister Constantia in marriage⁴, difficulties might necessarily be expected to arise, but after several skirmishings, in which Earl Geoffry and his son came off victorious⁵, the king consented to abandon the cause of the unfortunate Eustace, who had himself come over to maintain his rights, and who was obliged to return in sadness to England. So completely did Louis change sides, that he

¹ Diceto, Twysden, col. 525. Rob. de Monte, Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 292. Matt. Westmin., book ii., p. 39.

² Stapleton, Rot. Scac. Norm., Introd., p. lxxxix.

³ Epistolæ Sugerii, Bouquet, vol. xv., p. 520-1. Arnulf. Episc. Lexov., Ibid., vol. xvi., p. 657.

⁴ Gervase, col. 1350, Twysden.

⁵ Matt. Westm., book ii., p. 40.

agreed to assist in recovering those places in Normandy which still adhered to Stephen's interests¹; the bribe which prevailed with the king was the offer of Gisors, and the long-disputed region of the French Vexin, which was to be yielded to him on condition of his acknowledging the title of young Henry, and receiving homage from him. This feudal ceremony took place in the year 1151², and Matilda accompanied her husband to Paris to be present on the occasion, as we learn from Langtoft's Chronicle³.

“Jeffry of Anjowe toke conseile of frendes,
With Malde that is so trewe, to Saynt Denys he wendes.
And his sonne Henry, that men held of great pris;
Thei gaf him Normandie bifer the king Lowys.”

In the splendid court of Louis VII. and his beautiful, but unprincipled, queen, Eleanora of Aquitaine, the Angevin earl and his family remained for a considerable time, and while they were here, a negotiation was entered into for a marriage between Prince Henry, then in his eighteenth year, and the Princess Mary, the infant daughter of that Eleanora who herself, in the following year, became his bride. This circumstance is proved by a letter of Bernard, Abbot of Clareval, to Archbishop Suger⁴, the able minister of Louis, in which he strongly protests against this projected alliance, on account of the parties being within the forbidden degrees of consanguinity; that is to say, an ancestor of Louis of five or six generations back was descended from an ancestor equally venerable for antiquity of the earls of Anjou! So much for the absurd laws of consanguinity then in

¹ *Abrégé de l'Hist. de France*, p. 225., *Hist. Glorios. Reg. Lud.*, vol. vii. p. 127. *Chron. Reg. Franc.*, p. 210, Bouquet, vol. xii. Ralph Coggeshale, *Ibid.*, vol. xiii., p. 219. *Les Grandes Chroniques de France*, edited by M. Paulin, Paris, vol. iii., p. 404.

² Rob. de Monte, Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 292.

³ Vol. i., p. 109.

⁴ Bouquet, vol. xv., p. 604.

vogue, under the veil of which so many shameless acts of licentious profligacy were committed that no marriage, however solemnly entered into, could be considered as binding, while this unfailing plea for divorce was available, as soon as caprice or disgust rendered either party wishful to shake off the matrimonial yoke. Scandalous reports are afloat, which assert that the French Queen felt and did not attempt to conceal a strong *penchant* for the Plantagenet earl¹, whose handsome person and literary accomplishments would possess many attractions for one so volatile, and yet so critical in her tastes, as this Provençal queen; if they be true, they certainly place Eleanora in a curious position, unique even amidst the oft-entangled relationships consequent on royal alliances—that of being attached to the father of her future husband, while that husband himself was pledged to her daughter.

Under such circumstances, the residence of Matilda in the French court must have been anything but comfortable. As there is proof that neither she nor the prince her son returned at the same time with Earl Geoffrey, it is probable that a feeling of indignant jealousy induced her abruptly to leave a court, the fascinations of which still had power to retain her faithless lord. Whether Earl Geoffry returned the affection of Eleanora we are not informed, though the fact of his lingering behind at the French court, seems to give some colour to the supposition. Certain, however, it is, that he was far from being a faithful husband; three natural children, a son called Hameline², and two daughters, Aldewide and Emma, are named by the ancient historians in such a manner as proves that he publicly acknowledged them

¹ Cotton. MS., Vitellius, C. ix., f. 135.

² Anselme, Hist. Geneal. de la France, vol. vi., p. 20. His shield is given in Guillim's Heraldry, p. 32. Azure, bordure gules, with eight lioncels or.

Were we to believe one half of the eulogiums heaped upon the noble Plantagenet by the contemporary Angevin chroniclers, we must come to the conclusion that he was one of the most exalted characters that ever existed. After making the necessary deductions from their exaggerated statements, enough still remains to prove that Geoffry ranked high both as a knight and a man of letters. The presumption and rashness of his early youth led him into acts of ingratitude towards his father-in-law and benefactor Henry I.; but during the whole course of his active life, we find not one single instance of the savage cruelty or perfidious breach of faith which disgraced the characters of too many of his contemporaries; and the skill with which he maintained his ground, in circumstances critical and difficult in no slight degree, shows that as a general and a soldier he possessed superior capabilities.

The corpse of Earl Geoffry was conveyed by his sorrowing attendants to the city of Mans, and there met by his three sons. It was with the utmost difficulty that Prince Henry could be prevailed upon to take the oaths exacted from him by his father's last commands, nor was it until he found that on no other condition could the remains of his parent be suffered to be interred, that he gave a reluctant and tearful consent¹—an ill omen for the future accomplishment of his engagements. The funeral of the Angevin earl was solemnized with great pomp in the church of St. Julian, his patron saint², at Mans, where he was interred before the high altar³. A magnificent image,

¹ Gul. Newbrig., ut supra.

² During the childhood of Geoffry, when his father, Earl Foulk, was projecting his first expedition to the Holy Land, after mass had been performed in this church, he took the boy up in his arms, and in the hearing of all the people, said, "To thee, O Julian, to thee I commend my son and my land, that thou mayst be the protector and defender of both." From this circumstance the saint was regarded by Geoffry with special interest. Ex Gest. Pont. Cenomaniae, Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 551.

³ Diceto, p. 526. Gervase, p. 1370, Twysden. Chron. d'Anjou, Bourdigné, vol. i., p. 313.

decorated with gold and precious stones, was erected upon his tomb, "which," says the poetic chronicler¹ who gives us these details, "seems to threaten ruin to the proud, and yet bestow favour upon the humble;" but by what artistical skill two expressions of countenance so diametrically opposite were conveyed into the same statue, we are not informed. A tablet of copper was also erected to his memory shortly after his decease, by William, Bishop of Mans, and suspended on one of the pillars of the cathedral, opposite the Chapel of the Crucifix. This curious relic of antiquity is still in existence; it presents us with an enamelled portrait of the earl, which depicts him as in the prime of manhood, with a ruddy complexion and bushy beard. He wears an azure helmet of the Phrygian form, with a golden leopard emblazoned in front. His under tunic is blue, bordered and trimmed with gold; the surtunic of dark green, is similarly ornamented. The mantle, also of light blue, is lined with the fur called "vair." A sash or belt passes over the right shoulder and under the left arm. The right hand brandishes the sword, whilst the left supports the shield, of the long kite-shaped form, which denotes its great antiquity. It is azure, three leopards or. Below the figure is a Latin distich, which has been thus translated—

"Thy sword, brave prince, can chase a thousand foes,
And to the church give peace and glad repose²."

This tablet was taken down during the revolution; and, after having narrowly escaped the melting-pot, is now deposited in the museum at Mans³.

The Empress Matilda did not honour with her presence

¹ Stephen of Rouen, laudatory poem on Geoffry of Anjou, MS. St. Germain, No. 1547, Bibliothèque Royale, Paris. See also Johan Mon., Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 531.

² "Ense tuo, princeps, prædonum turba fugatur,
Ecclesiisque quies, pace vigente datur."

³ It is engraved by Stothard in his Monumental Effigies, pp. 2 and 3.

the funeral obsequies of her deceased husband; indeed, when the circumstances under which they last parted are considered, his death cannot be supposed to have caused her sincere regret.

The events of the several following years of Matilda's life are few and unimportant. Still retaining her place in the court of Rouen, she welcomed thither with due state, the bride of her son, Eleanora of Aquitaine, whose charms had formerly been so fatal to her own peace; and here too she greeted the birth of the first-born son of Prince Henry. During his absence in England, when those arrangements were made which afterwards secured him the crown, he left his wife and child under her guardianship in Normandy. That she held a sort of joint regency with her son, is proved by the association of her name with his in monastic grants¹, as well as by the circumstance of her assuming the ducal prerogative of confirming the election of the Archbishop of Rouen and the Abbot of St. Michael's, which took place early in 1154, and which, on the 24th of June, were again confirmed by Henry².

Soon afterwards her sympathies were warmly excited in behalf of the young duke, for in the summer of this year, he had an illness which, though not dangerous, was yet long and trying³. It was followed by the happy conclusion of a peace with France, with which power he had been at war almost ever since his marriage with the divorced queen of Louis VII. It is probably during the period of this war, that we should date an odd manœuvre, carried on on the part of the empress, by means of some of her favourite ecclesiastics.

William, Prior of St. Barbara, near Lisieux, had opportunities of gathering information about the movements of

¹ See an example in La Roque, *Hist. Geneal. de la Maison d'Harcourt*, vol. iv., p. 1396.

² Rob. Abbot of St. Michael's, Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 296. *Gallia Christina*, vol. xi., col. 519.

³ Rob. de Monte, *ut supra*, p. 297. *Chron. Norm.*, p. 990

the enemy, and was, although at a distance, one of Matilda's main counsellors; but it was no easy matter, in times so troublesome, to convey letters and messages safely, and the empress and her "traist friend" were put to some straits in this matter. Necessity, however, is the mother of invention; they availed themselves of the services of a worthy brother of the convent, who was blessed with a remarkably thick and bushy beard, and folding their letters up into very small compass, they deposited them among the densely-matted hair, and the messenger, secure from all detection, even in case of a search, travelled thus freely through a troubled country, conveying the correspondence of his employers, who doubtless greatly prided themselves on their new and truly original letter-bag! The prior was rewarded by Matilda with six *argentii*, (rather less than a shilling of our money,) a day, which pension was afterwards continued by her son¹.

When at length intelligence arrived in Normandy of the death of King Stephen, Matilda added one to the brilliant assemblage of bishops and nobles, who flocked to Barfleur, the place of his projected embarkation, to offer their congratulations to Duke Henry; and when at length her fondest wishes were accomplished, in the promotion of her darling son to the crown of England, she indulged her maternal pride by accompanying him thither, to witness, rather than to share, the splendours of his approaching coronation².

But England was too much associated with reminiscences of the past to be a pleasant residence to one who had been rejected from its sovereignty; and every face among the barons who crowded to pay their homage to their new-made king, must have brought with it a host of painful recollections to the dethroned empress; nor is it at all likely that the court of the gay and giddy queen

¹ Monstier's *Neustria pia*, pp. 716, 722. Bouquet, vol. xv., p. 505.

² Cont. Wace's *Brut.*, Cott. MS., Vitellius, C. x., f. 135 b., col. 1.

Eleanor would be a congenial abode for her mature and now mild, though dignified mother-in-law. Matilda therefore speedily returned to Normandy, where, although not invested with the actual regency, yet, during Henry's long absences in England, she exercised a considerable share of authority, as appears by the public documents of the period, in which allusions to her are frequent¹. She even assumed occasionally a tone of command over her son's English subjects. A letter of hers is still in existence, in which she commands Maurice, Bishop of Hereford, in her own name as well as that of the king her son, to forbear any law-suits against her favourite monks at Reading, until the king, who has lately come to Normandy, shall return to England².

Until the close of her life, she maintained a powerful and judiciously-exerted influence over her son, who ever regarded her with the most tender respect and affection. This very year he abandoned, in compliance with her wishes, his wild scheme of conquering Ireland, and bestowing it upon his youngest brother, William³. But the peace of the empress was greatly disturbed by the frequent quarrels that arose between Henry and his brother Geoffry, and which were fostered by the King of France.

Notwithstanding the reluctant oaths forced from him at the funeral of his father, Henry, on his accession to the English crown, was by no means disposed to resign his lion's share of his continental dominions. Geoffry, on the other hand, asserted his right to the province of Anjou; and was warmly supported by the Angevins themselves, to whom it was far more agreeable to be under the rule of an earl of their own, than to form a mere appanage to the throne of England. In 1155, Henry came over to Normandy, and observed the feast of the Purification of

¹ Epistolæ Hist., Bouquet, vol. xvi., p. 105, &c.

² Reading Chartulary, Harl. MS. 1708, fol. 17 b.

³ Chron. Norm., Rer. Norm. Script., p. 991.

the Virgin at Rouen, where Geoffry met him, and tried to obtain a confirmation of his claims; but utterly failing, he retired to Anjou, whither his royal brother speedily followed¹, and took from him not only Anjou, but also the three fortresses of Chinon, Loudon, and Mirabel, which he previously possessed. The landless youth would have been left without house or home, had he not been received by the inhabitants of Nantes, who, discontented with their duke, Hoel, invited him to assume the dominion over them, which he thankfully accepted, and retained to the day of his death². In many respects Geoffry is said to have strongly resembled his father: he was handsome, brave, and exceedingly generous; wherever he went, he took pleasure in relieving the poor, releasing the captives, and distributing gifts among his followers; and his death was a source of great regret to his subjects. We do not learn that the imperial mother interfered at all in favour of this her less fortunate son, who never possessed any large share of her regard whilst living, although, upon his death, she bestowed some lands on the abbey of Lilly for prayers to be offered for his soul³.

Matilda's time and attention were much occupied by her numerous monastic foundations; that the funds at her disposal were very considerable is manifest, from the number and extent of these benefactions⁴. In 1157 was completed the erection of Notre Dame du Vœu at Cherbourg, which she founded in performance of a vow made on her voyage to England⁵. Henry gave her the Chapel of Valones and the Island of Ulm towards its endowment⁶. This place afterwards became a favourite residence with

¹ Chron. Norm., ut supra.

² Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 300, note.

³ Stapleton's Introd. to Rot. Scac. Norm., p. lxxxix.

⁴ See Gall. Christ., vol. xi., Inst., col. 133. Annal. Præmonstrat., vol. i., col. 502.

⁵ Gallia Christina, vol. xi., col. 940.

⁶ Gallia Christina, vol. xi., Inst., col. 244. Petri Bles. Opera, p. 772.

her, and here she spent several of her later years. This year, too, the building of the Monastery of Valace was finished, founded under the following circumstances:— During the time of the fearful siege of Oxford, when the empress was in a situation of such imminent peril, she vowed the erection of some monastery in case she escaped. Waldran, Earl of Mellent, a powerful Norman noble, had also made a similar vow in a time of equal danger. On his return from the Holy Land, he was within a hair's-breadth of suffering shipwreck, when one of his companions suggested, "at a time when it was not difficult to persuade him," that he should make the usual promise of erecting a church or convent in case of his deliverance¹. As the instances in which vows of this description had been followed by happy results were numerous, while the death of the parties concerned prevented, in most cases, the recording of those which had failed, great reliance was placed upon them by our wonder-loving ancestors.

The Archbishop of Rouen, hearing of the vows made by these two illustrious personages, counselled them to unite their efforts in the erection of one monastery, which they accordingly did in that of Valace. Then arose the important question of the selection of monks to inhabit these sacred cloisters; and a violent quarrel broke out between the brethren of Mort-mer and those of St. Marcell, for this valuable privilege. Now there was a certain lady abbess of Montvilliers, named Matilda, a natural daughter of Henry I., and consequently half-sister to the empress, whose mother was sister to the Earl of Mellent, and who, from her close relationship to both the founders of the abbey, thought she had a right to interfere in the matter. This high-born dame entertained a partiality for the Abbot of Mort-mer, strong enough to induce some sly insinuations on the part of the chroniclers, not very creditable to her saintly character; and with him she discussed

¹ Monstier's *Neustria pia*, p. 848.

the desirableness of increasing the importance of the monks of Mort-mer, by peopling this new monastery from their fraternity. The abbess determined to use all her influence,—and she seems to have possessed a fair share,—with her imperial sister, in behalf of the aforesaid monks, and for that purpose went to pay her a visit. She managed her business so well, that the empress declared in the most positive manner, that unless the dispute between Mort-mer and St. Marcell were immediately decided in favour of the former, she would call in the monks of a third monastery. This energetic threat produced the desired effect; and in a sort of triumphal procession, the victorious brethren of Mort-mer came down the Seine to inhabit their new abode: the monks performed the journey in boats, but the abbot and superiors thought it more befitting their station to travel by land, and wound their way along the road which leads by the romantic banks of the Seine. The two Matildas went to meet them in the pleasant meadows by the river-side, without the walls of Rouen. “Behold, my sister, these worthy men!” exclaimed the abbess, as her favourite abbot and his companions appeared in sight; and she employed the interval till their approach, in persuading her sister to receive them handsomely, and shew favour to them. The empress promised to do all in her power; to the monks she gave an abundant store of provisions, and sent them on to continue their voyage; but the superiors were courteously entertained for several days at Rouen by the empress and her sister, before they rejoined their brethren¹.

The foundation charter of Valace, which runs in the name of Matilda and that of her son, stipulates that intercessions shall be made for the souls of King Henry her father, her mother Queen Matilda, and all her ancestors and descendants; also for the stability and peace of Eng-

¹ Ex Cod. MSS. Abbat. Valaciæ, quoted by Dumonstier, p. 852. Gallia Christina, vol. xi., col. 313.

land and Normandy. Her style is, "Matilda imperatrix, Henrici regis filia;" the proud title of, "Domina Anglorum," she dropped ever after the coronation of Prince Henry, though she appears to have retained it during the life of King Stephen, even when it was but an empty name. In several charters given after the death of her second husband Geoffry, his name is associated with that of the Emperor Henry V., in her request for prayers to be offered for their souls, a proof that his memory was not regarded by her with perfect indifference. The allusions contained in several of these documents to Drogo her chamberlain, her cup-bearer, and other domestic officers, prove that her household was conducted on a scale of royal magnificence. The dowry settled upon her by her imperial spouse, though diminished when she left Germany, was still very considerable; and her son, Henry II., seems to have granted to her extensive possessions in Normandy, for her monastic charters abound with gifts of land in that province¹.

In the year 1161, Matilda was seized with a severe illness, and King Henry, who, with his queen Eleanor, had been keeping the Christmas festival at Falaise, instantly hastened to Rouen to see her. Deeming her end approaching, she, with her son's consent, made large distributions of alms to the poor, and lavished enormous wealth upon her favourite monasteries; but, a second time in her life, she was raised from the very borders of the grave, and restored to health².

The government of Matilda in Normandy, during the latter period of her life, stands out in forcible and pleasing contrast with her short-lived dominion in England. By the quiet dignity of her manners she secured the respect of the citizens of Rouen, while the numerous benefits she conferred upon them gave her a large share in their regard.

¹ Gal. Christ., vol. xi., Inst., col. 244, &c.

² Rob. de Monte, Pistorius, vol. i., p. 895.

She expended an immense sum of money on the erection of a stone bridge over the Seine, to supply the place of the wooden one till then in use; this structure, for its beauty and solidity, was long the admiration and wonder of the age; it consisted of thirteen arches, the five central ones being of such elevation as to give a signally commanding appearance to the whole; the strength of the masonry is demonstrated by the fact that it resisted all the impetuosity of the river, and stood firm until the year 1502, when it gradually gave way, and now but slight vestiges of it remain¹.

The court of the empress was frequently enlivened by the temporary visits of the English king and the members of his rising family. Her son William also occasionally resided with her until his death, which took place in 1164 at Rouen, where he was buried on the left of the high altar in the cathedral of Notre Dame².

To the latest period of her life, the tender affection felt by Matilda for her eldest son remained undiminished, and her last acts bear record of the zealous interest she took in his welfare. Among the very few illustrations of the domestic expenditure of Henry II. which yet remain in existence, the name of his mother once occurs. The king is recorded to have paid 6s. 8d. for the carriage of some of the fine fruits for which Normandy had so long been celebrated, which had been sent to him by "the lady empress³."

During the quarrels between Henry and his ex-chancellor

¹ Farin, *Hist. de Rouen*, vol. i., p. 164.

² Rob. de Monte, p. 308, Ralph Coggeshale, p. 219, Bouquet, vol. xiii.

³ Pipe Roll, 11 Henry II., Arch. Cant. Record Office, Carlton Ride. The pipe rolls are the accounts given in by the sheriffs of the different counties of monies for which they were accountable. They afford curious incidental illustrations of the manners of the times, and particularly of the class of misdemeanours for which fines were exacted, but it is only very incidentally that they throw light on the royal expenditure. The few particulars that can be gleaned from them are however the more interesting, since they are the only series of records in existence during the reigns of Henry II. and Richard I., other documents of this class commencing with King John.

Becket, Matilda's powerful influence was strongly sued for on both sides; fortunately a large proportion of Becket's correspondence is still preserved, and to it we are indebted for our information respecting these negotiations, as well as for many incidental particulars of Matilda's declining years. In 1164 the archbishop addressed a letter to her, in which he extols her to the skies for her alms and benefactions, and for her anxiety about the peace of the Church, which, he says, is so great that she might almost say with the Apostle, "Who is weak and I am not weak? who is offended and I burn not?"

The object of the letter is to induce her to use her influence with the king, "who through her means had obtained both the kingdom and dukedom," to prevail upon him to restore the liberties of the Church, and to cease from his unusual and unheard-of exactions¹. But it was not an easy task to lead Matilda to take the part of any one, even an archbishop, against her son, and not all her reverence for the Church could counterbalance the dislike she felt towards the low-born Saxon who had caused Henry so many troubles. The king himself had sent to her a certain John of Oxford and other messengers, who assured her that Becket, in his contentions for the liberties of the Church, was solely actuated by the love of wealth and power²; they had scarcely retired when ambassadors from the archbishop arrived at Rouen, but they found the empress in no mood to receive them favourably. For some time she absolutely refused to admit them to her presence or to read the letters of Becket, and, even when she did consent to a conference, she saluted them with very sharp words; by degrees, however, they contrived to soften down her wrath, and, at the third interview, she agreed to take the letters, but secretly, as she wished to conceal from the clergy her intercourse with the arch-

¹ Epist. St. Thomæ, Bouquet, vol. xvi., pp. 225-6.

² Letter of Nicholas of Rouen to Becket, Ibid., p. 226.

bishop until she had decided what course to adopt. But these epistles were in Latin, and Matilda, unlike several of her learned predecessors, did not understand that language: she was therefore compelled to avail herself of the assistance of Becket's messengers to read the letters, and translate them for her into French¹. The archbishop, knowing the importance of her influence, had thrown all his eloquence, of which he possessed a considerable share, into these epistles, and such was the effect they produced upon the empress, that she apologized for the harsh words that she had used, both in public and private, against the archbishop, declaring that, if these statements were true, Henry had concealed from her what he was attempting against the Church, knowing how highly she valued its liberties. She now sent letters to her son by one of her clerks, opening her mind fully to him on the subject, and "in any case," added she to the ambassadors, "if I think my labour can be of any use, I will do what I can for the peace of the Church and my son²." Having thus far succeeded in their mission, the messengers left her and went on the same errand to the Bishop of Lisieux; during their absence they prepared a written statement of all the grounds of dispute between the two parties, and, thus armed, returned to the court of Rouen. Matilda appointed an early day to hear their cause, and reclined on her couch in her private rooms, from which all her attendants were carefully excluded, the aged empress ordered all the documents to be read, or rather translated to her. The account of her replies will be best given by the ambassador Nicholas himself. "You must know," says he, in his letter to Becket, "that the lady empress was ingenious in the defence of her son, excusing him now by his love of justice, and now on account of the malice of some of the bishops. She was acute and discreet in comprehending

¹ Letters of Nicholas of Rouen, p. 227.

² Ibid., ut supra.

the origin of the Church disturbances; she said some things in which we greatly praise and admire her sense, and made many acute remarks on the plurality of benefices and the idleness and luxury of some of the clergy, who have no fear of being called to account, do what they will—and these statements she illustrated by recent examples. Still she is a woman of the race of *tyrants*, and some of Henry's usages she approved, such as not permitting his ministers or justiciaries to be imprisoned without his consent¹, &c." It will easily be seen that the power assumed by a prelate of exercising ecclesiastical authority over the ministers of state must have been exceedingly detrimental to the royal authority, and Matilda at once perceived this, and objected to it. On the other hand, some of the king's measures, especially with regard to the oaths of compliance with the constitutions of Clarendon, recently extorted from the bishops, she strongly disapproved; and it was proposed, as a first step towards a reconciliation, that the new regulations should be abandoned, and that Henry should leave himself and his cause in the hands of his imperial mother and a few trusty counsellors². The skill with which Matilda argued with these experienced diplomatists, the clear good sense and keen discernment displayed in the sound views she entertained of the points at issue, and, more than all the rest, the maternal love with which she strove to excuse, when she could not justify, the conduct of her son, place her character in a very pleasing light. Matilda several times wrote and sent messengers to the Pope, requesting that he would interfere and become a mediator in the quarrel; but Alexander was too much interested in upholding the prerogatives so stoutly maintained by Becket to assume such an office, and he endeavoured to throw it back upon the empress³. He wrote to her himself, requesting her to

¹ Letters of Nicholas of Rouen, ut supra.

² Nicholas' letter, ut supra.

³ Gallia Christina, vol. xi., col. 941.

offer an atonement for all her past sins by reconciling Becket with Henry¹. On the receipt of this epistle Matilda sent a letter to Becket; but perhaps the holy father would not have thought his behests very well fulfilled had he heard the purport of the epistle, for she rebuked the archbishop severely for his ingratitude towards one to whom he owed so much, assuring him that nothing but great humility and moderation could ever reinstate him in the king's graces². To Henry, however, she wrote in a different strain, earnestly entreating him to relax a little, and strongly recommending the archbishop to his favour; but her efforts failed to produce any permanent effect on either side; both parties were too deeply offended, and Becket, after having excommunicated all those who adhered to the constitutions of the council of Clarendon, was formally banished the kingdom, which he had previously left of his own accord, and all his goods were confiscated. He revenged himself by threatening to excommunicate King Henry; but Matilda, whose spirit was now thoroughly roused, laughed at his threats, and treated him even with contempt³, for she well knew, as it afterwards proved⁴, that Pope Alexander durst not, at the present crisis, permit the archbishop to proceed to extremities.

The schism that took place during the papacy of Alexander III., occasioned by the rival claims of the antipopes, Victor and his successor Paschal, which at that time rent the catholic world, rendered Alexander less persevering in supporting the cause of Becket than he otherwise might have been, for he could not but fear lest the English monarch should throw his powerful influence into the scale

¹ Bouquet, vol. xvi., p. 235.

² Matilda's letter to Becket in Bouquet, vol. xvi., p. 235; a translation of it is printed in "Letters of Royal and Illustrious Ladies of Great Britain, vol. i., p. 18.

³ Letter of Nicholas to Becket, and Becket's reply, pp. 251 and 255, Bouquet, vol. xvi.

⁴ See correspondence between Alex. and Becket, Bouquet, vol. xvi., p. 315.

of his antagonist; and this fear was increased by the alliance recently entered into between Henry II. and the Duke of Saxony, who, with all the German Princes, entered warmly into the cause of Paschal¹. That Henry did not abandon Alexander, even when that pontiff took the part of his rebellious ex-chancellor, has been matter of surprise to our historians, and can be accounted for only on the supposition that some strong counter influence was at work to prevent such a step—and this was, undoubtedly, that of his mother the Empress Matilda. Rotrode, Archbishop of Rouen, says in a letter to one of the cardinals that the empress had written to Henry on the subject, though she refused to see the messengers sent to her from Alexander, on account of the bishops by whom she was surrounded; “but,” he adds, “fear not that she will waver for one instant, for she is a woman girt about with fortitude².”

In truth, Matilda had need of all the skill and firmness she possessed to steer her way through such critical circumstances, for the Pope and Becket and the English king all in turn appealed to her influence. In 1166, Becket was strongly advised to seek an interview with the empress, accompanied only by a few discreet clerks and the Archbishop of Rouen³, but there is no reason to believe that it ever took place; Matilda, wishful as she might be to act as mediator, yet, perhaps, shrunk from the idea of conversing with the man who had brought such a train of vexations upon her son.

She was now fast approaching the close of her long and varied career, but her last public act breathed the same mild and pacific disposition, and the same attachment to her royal son which had so strongly characterized her later

¹ Willelmus, Ex Act. Thomæ Cant., Bouquet, vol. xiv., pp. 458, 462.

² Letter of Rotrode to Henry Presbyter, cardinal, in Bouquet, vol. xvi., p. 238.

³ See letter of John of Salisbury, Bouquet, vol. xvi., p. 531.

years. She became the mediator of a peace between Louis VII. and King Henry, who had been at war since the Easter of the year 1167. Her letter to King Louis is still extant¹, in which she strongly urges him to communicate directly with her on the subject, and eloquently pleads every motive of expediency, duty, and religion, to induce his consent to a peace. She so far accomplished her object as that a truce was entered into, in the month of August, to last till the Easter of the following year; but she lived not to witness the happy results brought about by her means. A short time previous to her decease, and probably when the shadows of the grave were already surrounding her, the empress caused herself to be consecrated a nun of the convent of Fontevraud, perhaps with the hope of rendering her final salvation doubly secure: but she did not take up her abode there².

While she was residing at the Abbey of Notre Dame des Près, near Rouen, a painful internal disorder, from the wasting progress of which she had suffered occasionally at least ever since the birth of her second son Geoffry, reached its climax, and after a short but severe attack of illness, put a period to her mortal existence, at one o'clock in the morning of the 10th of September, 1167, when she had reached the mature age of sixty-five³. Henry was in Bretagne when he heard at once of his mother's illness and death; but, regardless of the critical state of his affairs there, he set off immediately to pay the last tokens of respect to one whom he, above all others, was bound to love and venerate.

The Empress Matilda was interred, at her own particular request, as previously mentioned, in the abbey of Bec. A monument, covered with plates of silver, erected to her memory by the filial devotion of King Henry, bore an

¹ Bouquet, vol. xvi. p. 141.

² Chron. Gauf. Prior Vossen, Labbe Bibliotheca MSS., vol. ii., p. 317.

³ Chron. Beccense, p. 9, printed in Dacher's Opera Lanfranci.

inscription, penned probably by one of his courtly ecclesiastics, which certainly tends to celebrate the son rather than to perpetuate the fame of the mother. It is in Latin, and has been thus rendered—

“By father much, spouse more, but son *most* blest,
Here Henry's mother, daughter, wife doth rest¹.”

Another epitaph was composed by Arnulph, Bishop of Lisieux, who wrote a life of the empress, of which the only known copy was long preserved in the library of the college of Navarre, at Paris, but it is now unfortunately lost². After speaking of her as a royal mother and daughter, and still more exalted wife, he says, “that glittering still more by the splendid light of her virtues, she surpasses the good fortune both of birth and marriage³.”

The dying wishes of the empress, by which, for the third time under similar circumstances, she lavished profuse gifts upon her monastic establishments, as well as on the poor, the widows, and the orphans, were religiously observed by her sorrowing son. Year after year passed away, and still the public acts of Henry-Fitz-empress, as he generally styled himself, bore witness to the tender veneration in which he held the memory of his august mother; the charters which she had granted were confirmed by him—her favourite monasteries were taken under his especial protection; and almost all his own

¹ Gallia Christina, vol. xi., col. 222, Bouquet, vol. xvi., p. 99. Ducarel's Norm. Antiq., p. 88.

² Stapleton's Introd. to Rot. Scac. Norm., p. xc., note 2. The author was equally unsuccessful in a more recent search after the manuscript in question.

³ Regia mater erat, tum regibus orta, Matildis,
Extuleratque thoro tum meliore genus;
Sed magis egregiâ virturum luce coruscans,
Fortunam generis vicerat atque thori.
Septembris decimâ, sub primâ transiit horâ,
De nostrâ ad verum nocte revectâ diem.
MS. 1028, Supplement Français Bibliothèque du Roi, Paris.

religious grants were accompanied by injunctions to offer up prayers for her soul¹.

In 1282, when some alterations were being made in the abbey of Bec, the corpse of the Empress Matilda was discovered, wrapped in an ox-hide, then the uniform mode of burial²: it was re-interred with great solemnity in the middle of the chancel, before the high altar, and the former monument re-erected over it; but this falling into decay, was replaced, in the year 1684, by a tablet of brass³, bearing a long Latin inscription, of which the following is a literal translation:—

To God the best and the greatest,
And to the eternal memory of Matilda the Augusta.
Great by birth, greater by marriage, but greatest by posterity.
Here lies the daughter, wife, and parent of Henry.
She was the most noble daughter of
Henry I., King of England;
The most august spouse of
Henry V., Emperor of the Romans;
By second marriage, the illustrious wife of
Geoffry le Bel, Earl of Anjou,
By whom she became
The most illustrious parent of Henry II., King of England.
She was extremely munificent towards the church of Bec,
Which, while she lived, she enriched with her treasures;
And after death
Wished it to be the resting-place of her body.
The happy termination of her life took place
The 10th of Sept., in the year of our Lord 1167.
The monks of Bec, of the congregation of St. Maur,
Have placed this for an eternal memorial.
An. 1684⁴.

This monument remained until the time of the revolution, when it shared the common fate of sepulchral mementos⁵.

It is a singular coincidence that no two of the family

¹ Gal. Christ., vol. xi., Inst., col. 245-250, &c. Tanner's Notitia Monastica, Lincolnshire, No. 32. Chron. Gauf. Vossen, ut supra. Stapleton, Rot. Scac. Norm., Introd., p. clii.

² Chron. Beccense, in Dacher Opera Lanfranci, p. 14.

³ Ducarel, p. 50. Depping, Hist. de la Normandie, vol. ii., p. 58.

⁴ Bourget, Hist. de l'Abbé de Bec, p. 99. Ducarel, p. 89.

⁵ Depping, vol. ii., p. 58, note.

of Matilda were united in sepulture. Her father, King Henry, was interred in the Abbey of Reading; her mother in that of Westminster; and the billows of the ocean rolled over the unburied bones of her only brother. Her imperial husband found a proud resting-place among the monuments of his ancestors at Spire, or perchance in the lonely burial-ground of an obscure monastery. Geoffry Plantagenet, the father of her children, was interred in the cathedral of Mons; Geoffry the younger within the city of Nantes, and her youngest son, William, in the cathedral of Rouen. The empress herself chose the abbey of Bec as her final resting-place, while the bones of her beloved son, King Henry, repose under a stately monument in the abbey of Fontevraud.

The Empress Matilda was greatly distinguished by the extent of her religious benefactions, several of which have been already alluded to. The monastery of Notre Dame du Vœu at Cherbourg was erected and endowed by her, in fulfilment of the vow before mentioned, which she made during her stormy passage to England. Another of the same name, in the Pays de Vaux, she built, after the birth of her youngest son William, in honour of St. Norbert, a monk greatly renowned for his piety and for the miracles said to be wrought by him after his conversion, to whom she was first introduced at the court of her imperial husband Henry V., and whom she held in the greatest reverence¹. That of St. André, in the forest of Gouffer, was also erected and endowed by her², and her donations to other monasteries were very liberal—the abbey of Bec, St. Ouen, and Notre Dame des Près, near Rouen, and La Noue, in the diocese of Evreux, being among the number; besides which, she had bestowed her favours on many establishments in England³.

¹ Stapleton's *Introd. to Rot. Scac. Norm.*, p. lxxxvii., note ¹.

² Du Moulin, p. 387.

³ *Gal. Christ.*, vol. xi., col. 665, 940, *Inst.*, col. 133.

In memorializing the actions of the long-since dead, we ought to judge them, not by the light which the increased intelligence and experience of a long course of after ages reflects back upon them, but, as nearly as may be, by that in which they would be regarded by the actors themselves; and therefore, although this lavishing of riches upon institutions which we now believe to be utterly at variance with the true beneficent spirit of that Christianity whose aim is rather to communicate than to receive good, may seem to us a profitless expenditure, yet it was undoubtedly a sacrifice made to religious principle, however misguided, and as such is entitled to our respect. Fortunately Matilda's liberality did not stop here; the widow, the orphan, and the sick and helpless poor were the peculiar objects of her charity, and, during the latter years of her life, none of these ever met with a repulse from her.

Of her character little need to be said here; it has already sufficiently appeared in the details of her life. Few, very few, are the instances where age, adversity, and affliction, have produced so complete a revolution of mind¹. Matilda was by birth, marriage, and inheritance, the most illustrious lady of her time in Europe; yet how much more truly noble when, in mild and dignified old age, she exercised a delegated authority in the province, by inheritance her own, than when, in the plenitude of pride and power, King Stephen was led as a prisoner before her, and all England bowed in homage at her feet!

The cold policy of historians leaves it difficult for them to account for her cheerful resignation of a crown so long and earnestly contested, but they do not calculate on the love, deep, passionate, and intense, which dwelt in the bosom of the empress, even in her haughtiest days, for the boy, who had first kindled up within her that glow of a mother's affection, which formed the redeeming trait of her character, and which lent so much of beauty and dignity

¹ Berrington's *Life of Henry II.*, Introd., p. 13.

to her later days. The vigour and activity for which she had been ever remarkable remained unimpaired to the last; and there are few more touching pictures in history than that of the aged empress expending the last energies of her existence in zealous guardianship of the rights of that son to whom she had relinquished coronet, and crown, and sceptre.

Those who have been fortunate enough to gaze with delight on the exquisite statue by Canova of Napoleon's mother¹ have, in that magnificent embodying of all that is gracefully commanding and dignifiedly mild, a more perfect apprehension than any words of ours can convey of the character we would wish to depict as that of the once wayward, and proud, and stern-hearted Domina of England—the Empress Matilda.

¹ Now in possession of his Grace the Duke of Devonshire, at Chatsworth House, Derbyshire.

DAUGHTERS OF KING STEPHEN.

MATILDA—Birth—Betrothal—Death—Burial—Prayers for her soul.

MARY—Birth—Education at St. Leonard's—Removal to Lillechurch—Becomes prioress—Gifts of her family—Death of her parents—Is made Abbess of Rumsey—Dress—Becomes Countess of Boulogne—Forcible abduction—Marriage to Matthew of Flanders—Character of Earl Matthew—Arrival at Boulogne—Violent opposition of the Pope and others—Interdict—Mary's Flemish costume—Becomes a mother—Fresh interdict—Family unity—Mary's regency in absence of her husband—Her retired life—Dislike to Henry II.—War between him and Matthew—Mary's letter to Louis of France—Renewed animosity of the Pope—Mary resumes the veil—Matthew's second marriage—Is slain—Mary's death—Marriage of her daughters.

MATILDA.

THIS princess is one among the many royal daughters of England of whom we shall have little to record, saving their birth, their name, and their early death. She was the second child, but eldest daughter, of Stephen and Matilda, the then Earl and Countess of Boulogne, and was born in the year 1134, the one preceding that in which her father was elevated to the throne of England.

In 1136, the hand of Matilda, then a cradled infant of two years old, was plighted to Walcran, Earl of Mellent¹, together with the lands and earldom of Worcestershire,

¹ Ord. Vit., Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 756. Sandford, by mistake, calls him the Earl of Milan; see p. 43, Genealogical History.

which he received as her dower. The marriage, it need scarcely be said, was a mere piece of policy to serve as an excuse for the splendid bribe thus offered to this powerful earl, who became the leader of Stephen's party in Normandy; and probably neither he nor the king seriously looked forward to its accomplishment. The death of the baby-bride, however, shortly afterwards, put an end to all uncertainties on the subject. She was interred by the side of her brother Baldwin, who had preceded her to the tomb, in the priory of the Holy Trinity, then called Christ's Church, Aldgate¹.

The memory of her dead children was tenderly cherished by their mother; and, in 1148, when, after years of sorrow and anxiety, Stephen was again firmly established on the throne, her mind still reverted with fond affection to these her early lost; and she built and endowed the church and hospital of St. Katherine's near the Tower, "in pure and perpetual alms," to secure the repose of the souls of her infants, Baldwin and Matilda². King Stephen also gave the manor of Bracking, in Hertfordshire, to the canons of the Holy Trinity, for prayers to be said on behalf of his children buried there³; and further grants were added by Prince Eustace, after his mother's death, in which her name is to be associated with that of her infant children in the intercessions of the monks⁴. The early death of the Princess Matilda was fortunate for herself, as it saved her from many a bitter pang of humiliation, which the surviving children of King Stephen had to endure.

MARY.

THE date of the birth of this princess is not precisely ascertained; but as she was the youngest of her family, it most likely took place about the year 1136. From her

¹ Stow's Survey of London, vol. i., book ii., p. 12.

² Monast. Ang., vol. vi., p. 694.

³ Ibid., p. 153.

⁴ Ibid.

infancy, she was destined by her parents for the cloister; and the troubles that ensued in England, from the long contests between King Stephen and the Empress Matilda, rendering it impossible for the queen herself to superintend the education of her infant daughter, her religious profession was made earlier than it might otherwise have been.

The place chosen for the residence of the little Lady Mary was the nunnery of Stratford, since known by the name of St. Leonard's, near Stratford-bow in Middlesex¹. Several nuns of more mature age, from St. Sulpice, Bourges, were chosen to be her companions, or rather attendants; and Stephen and Matilda gave for her support the manor of Lillechurch in Kent. The discipline observed in the convent was rigid and strictly enforced; and the nuns of St. Sulpice, who had been accustomed to a more lenient mode of treatment, were wofully disconcerted to find themselves subjected to a government they did not at all admire; while their youthful mistress, who had the pliability of childhood in her favour, and would probably, on account of her royal rank, be exempted from anything like painful austerity, lived on happily and unmurmuringly. The woes of the discontented damsels at length broke out into such loud and open complaining, that they reached the ears of the king himself; and he, anxious to secure the future happiness of his daughter, determined to found a nunnery for her express benefit, on the manor which he had already presented for her support, and to remove her and her companions thither without delay. Accordingly a solemn assembly was convened at St. Leonard's, consisting of Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Chichester, the Abbot of Faversham, and other religious persons, in presence of whom the disappointed ladies of St. Leonard's were compelled to re-

¹ MS. of Theobald, Arch. of Cant., preserved among the archives of St. John's College, Cambridge.

nounce all claim to the manor of Lillechurch and its appendages, and also to the person of the royal maiden, who had so long resided among them. Perhaps they now repented not having relaxed a little in their control over their less devout sisters; but it was too late. The delighted nuns of St. Sulpice carefully packed up all the goods and chattels they had brought with them, and, in company with their royal mistress, removed to Lillechurch, where an establishment had been prepared for them. They were cordially welcomed by the king and queen; and the Lady Mary was installed into office as prioress of the convent¹. Under so young a superior, the sisters may be supposed to have enjoyed all the liberty they so ardently longed for; and we hear of no further complaints from them.

The queen was a frequent visitor at the convent of her daughter, and several deeds belonging to it are said to be "given in presence of Queen Matilda." Shortly after its foundation, Hugh, Abbot of St. John's College, at the particular request of the queen, gave it the important donation of Higham Church², which was confirmed by the king and Prince Eustace. But the affectionate and amiable mother did not long live to lavish proofs of tenderness on this her only surviving daughter; and her death, which took place in the year 1151, deprived Mary of a support of which she afterwards stood in too much need. The misfortunes of her family crowding fast upon the death of the queen, must have exercised a painful and saddening influence upon her mind, though neither the death of her father and eldest brother, nor the transfer of the sceptre into another family, appear to have made any difference in her external circumstances. The lands on which she depended for maintenance were not any part of those

¹ Tanner's *Notitia Monastica*, Kent, No. xxxiv. *Monast. Ang.*, vol. iv., p. 378.

² *Monast.*, ut supra.

which belonged to Stephen as King of England, and which were therefore liable to be revoked at pleasure by his successor. They formed part of the English estates granted to him by Henry the First, and, after his death, were inherited by his son William. This young earl confirmed to his sister, who was now his only surviving relative, all the gifts which the munificence of her parents had previously bestowed upon her. The grant is couched in somewhat melancholy terms. William entreats for himself, though unworthy, some interest in the prayers of the nuns which were daily offered up for the souls of so many of his family who had died before him¹.

For some unknown reason the Lady Mary afterwards exchanged the convent of Lillechurch for the more illustrious one of Rumsey in Hampshire. This nunnery was first founded by King Edward the elder, and dedicated to St. Elfleda, the blessed virgin, and had ever since been a favourite resort for those maidens of royal or noble rank who sought the seclusion of the cloister. Here Christiana, the sister of Edgar Atheling, had presided for many years², and here also Mary's great aunt, Matilda of Scotland, Queen of Henry I., had received her early education³.

The period of the elevation of the Princess Mary to the abbacy of Rumsey is not exactly known, but it cannot have been earlier than the year 1155, for we find the name of Matilda mentioned as abbess during that year⁴. It was not until she had been sometime a nun in the convent that she was raised to the rank of superior, and as no royal influence was now exerted in her behalf, she must have owed her elevation to her own merits and the free choice of her sisters alone, though her high birth might operate a

¹ Monast. Ang., ut supra, p. 382.

² Saxon Annals, p. 187.

³ Queen Matilda of Scotland and Mary, Countess of Boulogne, the mother of Stephen's queen, were both daughters of Malcolm, King of Scots, by Margaret, sister to Edgar Atheling.

⁴ Monast. Ang., vol. ii., p. 506.

little in her favour in the minds of those who still retained enough of the pride of the world to be gratified with the idea of having the daughter of a king as their spiritual mother.

The dress of an abbess of Rumsey, as delineated in the seal of the monastery, an engraving of which is given in Dugdale's *Monasticon* from an impression in the Augmentation Record Office, resembled in form that of the Benedictine nuns of the twelfth century—a large loose robe of black serge, with sleeves hanging down a full half yard below the arm, the throat and bosom enveloped in folds of white drapery, and partially concealed by the veil, which was worn much longer by the abbess than by the nuns; one of the hands is buried in the folds of the sleeve, while the other holds the staff of office.

In the year 1160¹ an event took place which materially altered the position of the Lady Mary. This was the death of her only brother, William, Earl of Boulogne and Mortagne². Of all the flourishing family of Stephen and Matilda the young abbess alone was left as the sole inheritor of the honours of her house. Her English estates King Henry II. disposed of without hesitation; and the earldom of Mortagne, given by his grandfather Henry I. to King Stephen, and confirmed by himself to that monarch and his successors, he bestowed as an appanage upon his own brother William³; but that of Boulogne had descended to Mary's mother from a long line of illustrious ancestors, and the inhabitants would consent to receive none but a descendant of their former earls, and, though far away in a distant English monastery, the Lady Mary de Blois was universally acknowledged by them as their countess. Her politic and

¹ Anselm. Gemb., p. 973, Pistorius, vol. i.

² He was buried at the abbey of Maison Dieu, at Mont-Morel, and Henry II. gave ten marks to the monks of that house to say masses for his soul. *Miscellaneous Exchequer Documents*, temp. Hen. II., No. 6, Chapter-house, Westminster.

³ *L'Art de Vérifier*, vol. xii., p. 354.

unscrupulous relative, Henry II., availed himself of this predominant feeling in the minds of the Bolonese to make her the tool of his own ambitious schemes. Engaged in constant struggles with Louis of France, it was of great importance to him to strengthen his continental alliances, and, with this view, regardless of all the vows, then considered so sacred, which bound her to a life of perpetual virginity, he, in 1160, offered the hand of the young abbess to Matthew of Alsace, younger son of Theodric or Thierry, Earl of Flanders, hoping doubtless that by thus providing an appanage for his younger son, he might secure the interest and assistance of the father¹. The scheme thus hastily formed, was as hastily executed: Matthew, elated with the idea of his approaching elevation, did not even consult his father or brother on the subject, but at once fell in with the proposal of the English king. Their arrangements were of course made with the greatest caution; the helpless and frightened abbess was forcibly conveyed from the scenes of peaceful retirement, over which she had so long presided, and, before she had time to recover from her astonishment, or comprehend the meaning of a proceeding so unlooked-for, she was compelled, by an authority it was hopeless to resist, to give her hand to one she had never before seen, and to utter at the nuptial altar vows which could not be breathed by a veiled nun, without the most fearful violation of those which she had previously sworn². No resource, however, was left to the trembling and reluctant maiden; the irrevocable words were spoken; the young nun had become a bride, and awoke from her dream of terrified surprise, to find herself the innocent object of execration to the whole

¹ Rob. de Monte, Pistorius, vol. i., p. 895, Anselm. Gemb., Ibid., p. 973, Alb. Trium Pont., Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 705.

² One chronicler alone differs from all the rest in reference to Mary's extreme reluctance. He represents her as having left her convent seduced by sophistical letters, and being married "*forte volens*." Cotton. MS., Claudius, D. vi., fol. 25, col. 1.

Catholic world'. Whether she found in her spouse those qualities which compensated her for the sufferings she had to undergo on his behalf, history does not inform us. We are told that Matthew was handsome, and brave², but his late proceeding showed that he was violent and unscrupulous, and that he paid but little regard to the obligations of that religion to which his gentle consort had been devoted from her early childhood. He was certainly much older than she, for we find him occupying an important position as mediator between his brother and the Earl of Holland, in the year 1147³, thirteen years previous to the date of his marriage; it was probable that he was now fast verging towards forty, whereas his bride could not be more than twenty-three or four. Mary appears to have been a resigned and submissive, though it is doubtful whether she could ever be called a happy, wife.

Immediately after their marriage, the earl and countess set off for Boulogne, and so far did the joy of the inhabitants at welcoming the descendent of their ancient earls prevail over their horror of the sacrilege committed, that they received the Lady Mary and her husband with enthusiastic delight. But their joy was speedily turned into mourning: such an unheard-of thing as the stealing away of an abbess from her convent occasioned the most violent agitation in the breasts of all true Catholics. Even the Chancellor Becket, who, previously to his elevation to the archiepiscopal see, was not at all famed for scrupulosity, entered his vehement protest against such a step⁴, and for years after, a constant animosity subsisted between him and Earl Matthew, which was carried to such a height,

¹ Chron. Fescamp., Labbe, Bibliotheca MSS., vol. i., p. 326. Anselm. Gemblacensis, ut supra. Rob. de Monte, ut supra.

² Meyer's Annales Flandriæ, p. 47 b, Genealogia Comitum Flandriæ, Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 414.

³ Miscel. Diplom., Martène, Thes. Anecd., vol. i., col. 1035.

⁴ Matt. West., book ii., p. 45. Paris, vol. i., p. 97, Cotton MS., Claudius, D. vi., f. 25, col. 1.

that Becket feared to venture himself across the channel for some time afterwards, lest he should be driven by any accident of weather into the dominions of the Earl of Boulogne, and be taken prisoner, or otherwise ill treated by him¹. At the same time Sampson, Archbishop of Rheims, at the command of Pope Alexander III., fulminated the thunders of excommunication against the newly-married earl, and laid his dominions under an interdict. The fact that his abbess bride was not included by name in either this or the succeeding bulls passed against him, proves that she was considered free from blame in the transaction. To crown these disasters, the Earl of Flanders himself, the father of the bridegroom, "who could not," we are told, "sustain with equanimity the sorrow occasioned by such execrable nuptials," was so incensed with his son, that he rose in arms against him, and, aided by his elder son Philip, sought to deprive him of the castle of Lens, which had been assigned to him as his inheritance and place of residence².

Matthew opposed a bold front to this tide of calamities; but it was no difficult matter to disarm his father's resentment, and the good terms on which he afterwards lived with his own family speak much for the tact and gentleness of the Countess Mary, who could thus succeed in conquering the strong prejudices which had existed against her in the minds of her husband's relations. But the thunders of the Vatican were not to be so easily repelled. The effect of an interdict, when rigidly enforced over a province, was painful in the extreme: all the churches were shut up; the usual offices of religion suspended, except the baptism of infants, and the administration of

¹ Heribert *Ex Actis Thomæ*, Arch. Cant., Bouquet, vol. xiv., p. 454. *Life and Letters of St. Thomas of Cant.*, published from the Vatican MS. by Christian Lupus, p. 67.

² *Auctor. Afflig.*, Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 277. Lambert Waterlos, *Ibid.*, p. 517. Anselm. Gemb., p. 974. Miræus, *Annales Belgici*, p. 745.

the last rites to the dying; marriages, if solemnized at all, were to take place in the churchyard, and the dead to be buried like brutes, without prayers or funeral service.

So distressing was all this to the inhabitants of Boulogne, that the earl, after having in vain tried to prevail upon the regular ecclesiastics of the two principal churches, St. Mary and St. Ulmar, to disregard the orders of the Pope, and perform their usual functions, displaced them, and elevated in their stead secular canons, who, more pliant to his will, consented to discharge the required duties. This conduct brought upon him another bull of excommunication from the Pope, accompanied by what was called the interdict of fire and water, by which any one who assisted the earl in procuring even the ordinary necessities of life was subjected to the same penalties as he himself had incurred¹. But these papal thunders, depending solely for their effect on the influence they exercised upon others, seemed to have played harmlessly round the head of the daring earl, who secure in the attachment of his new subjects, did not now suffer much practical inconvenience from them.

During these commotions, the Countess Mary constantly resided at Boulogne, and the devoted affection she inspired among her subjects tended much to neutralize the evils that had threatened to overwhelm herself and her husband. Excepting a few of the higher orders of the clergy, none of the Bolonese could be persuaded to regard their lord, and still less their gentle lady, the descendant of their ancient earls, in the light of excommunicated rebels, and they therefore entered as zealously into the projects of Earl Matthew, whether for self-defence or the revenge of his many affronts, as though the fearful sentence had never been passed upon him.

The Flemish costume for which the Lady Mary had exchanged her robe of serge and sable veil, as we see it

¹ *Epistolæ Alexandri III.*, Papæ, Bouquet, vol. xv., p. 788.

depicted in the seals of her sister-in-law Margaret Countess of Flanders and Hainault¹, and in that of her daughter Ida², was simple and graceful. The hair parted in braids on the forehead, and flowing unconfined down the shoulders, was surmounted by a very small cap, fitting close to the head, bordered with a single row of pearls, and a long veil floating behind. The dress was worn either fulled into a band at the neck, and then flowing in loose folds to the feet, confined only by a girdle at the waist, or else it was of the jacket form, fitting tight to the bust, a little opened at the neck, with a full embroidered skirt, and a long scarf hanging loosely on the shoulders. The former of these was the more ordinary dress—the latter, the costume adopted for riding, which was a favourite exercise of the ladies of that age: the falcon perched on the left wrist was the indication of high rank. Balthasar in his *Imagines Comitum Flandriæ*, introduces a much more gorgeous style of apparel at this period; but his professed portraits, besides being utterly without references, bear in themselves too many palpable anachronisms to be considered authentic.

Unfortunately no impression of the Lady Mary's seal, either as Abbess of Rumsey, or Countess of Boulogne, is known to be in existence, and therefore of her personal appearance we can give no account. The comical figure of Earl Matthew, mounted on a beast undoubtedly *meant* for a horse, dressed in a coat of chain armour, wearing the peculiarly ungraceful Norman helmet, and brandishing a huge sword, certainly does not vindicate his claim to beauty; but in this respect we prefer taking the pen of the chronicler rather than the tool of the engraver, as our guide³.

During the year succeeding her marriage, Mary became

¹ Olivarius Uredius, *Sigilla Comitum Flandriæ*, p. 23.

² Uredius, *Gen. Com. Fland.*, vol. i., p. 31.

³ Olivarius Uredius, *Gen. Com. Fland.*, vol. i., p. 31.

the mother of a little girl, to whom she gave the poetical name of Ida, a name hallowed in the memories of the Bolonese, from its having been borne by the great grandmother of Mary, the wife of Eustace II., and mother of "il pio Goffredo," and "Baldovino il forte," whose names are so celebrated in the annals of the first crusade, and who will be for ever enshrined in the memory of all the readers of Tasso's romantic lays. Some degree of disappointment was probably experienced by both parents that the child was not a boy, and this was increased the following year, when the countess gave birth to a second daughter¹.

The close of this year brought with it fresh denunciations from the offended pontiff Alexander III. The small regard paid to his former threats had exasperated him in a high degree, and the manner in which Earl Matthew had, partially at least, eluded them, by appointing canons to the priestly office, greatly increased his wrath; indeed, this second offence appears to have been regarded in a more serious light than even the former. In a letter to the Archbishop of Rheims, Alexander charges him and all other prelates to pronounce afresh the sentence of excommunication against Matthew, and also against the canons who had been so compliant with his wishes: exhorting the archbishop and all the Christian world to avoid any intercourse with the earl, who, instead of repenting of his former crimes, was thus adding to them, and making bad worse, and requesting him to spare no effort either of counsel or assistance to reinstate the former priestly occupants in the churches, and to drive out the intruders². In obedience to the commands of the Pope, the archbishop exerted all his influence to accomplish this important point, which, by forcing upon the churches priests who, in obedience to the pontifical commands, refused to perform

¹ Geneal. Com. Fland., vol. i., p. 30.

² Epist. Alex. III. in Bouquet, vol. xv., p. 788.

any of the offices of religion, would have brought back upon the unfortunate Bolonese all the horrors of the interdict; but his efforts were unsuccessful, and Alexander next directed him to apply to Theodric, the father of the earl, and to excite him to compel his son to restore the ecclesiastics¹. But the wrath which Earl Theodric had formerly cherished against his son and his daughter-in-law had long since evaporated, and he declined interfering in the matter. Matthew stood in a position of peculiar interest in the noble house of Flanders; Theodric had lost his eldest son; his second son Philip, though long married, had no children; and the youngest Peter had assumed the cowl. It was through Earl Matthew therefore, that Theodric hoped to transmit to his posterity the province of Flanders, enriched by the addition of the contiguous earldom of Boulogne, the splendid inheritance of his royal consort². It is true that Flanders was a male fief, and as yet the young earl had only daughters, but still the time was ardently (though it afterwards proved vainly) looked forward to, when the Lady Mary de Blois should give birth to the son and heir, for whom such extensive domains were in prospect. The amicable relationship existing between the Earl of Boulogne and his own family, is proved by the whole course of his public career during the succeeding years, and also by many documents signed by him and them in conjunction, and a frequent intercourse appears to have been maintained between them.

In 1165, Matthew went with his brother Philip on an expedition against Florence, Earl of Holland, in which they came off victorious; their antagonist being taken prisoner³. During this and other absences of her lord from the earldom, the powers of government were vested in Mary,

¹ Epist. Alex. III. in Bouquet, vol. xv., p. 788.

² Genealogia Comitum Flandriæ, Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 414.

³ Anselm. Gemblac., p. 977. Miræus, Annales, p. 749.

as countess in her own right. The public acts of Earl Matthew were always authenticated by her signature, and her seal was attached, and the few benefactions to the church recorded ^{to} have been made by this graceless knight, doubtless through her influence, are confirmed by her in a separate charter¹.

The ambitious Earl Matthew had not as yet reaped all the advantage he hoped for from his marriage with his English bride. The earldom of Mortagne, with some extensive English possessions, as well as that of Boulogne, formed part of the inheritance confirmed by Henry II. to Mary's brother, Prince William, and on his death of course devolving upon his sister; and Matthew was anxious to substantiate his claim to these possessions. He had several interviews with King Henry on the subject, at Rouen, but we do not find that he was accompanied on these occasions by his wife, through whom he claimed these lands; the sovereign who had forcibly intruded upon the sanctity of the convent, and compelled her to an unwilling violation of her sacred vows, cannot be supposed to have possessed much of her regard, and being brought up from her infancy to the cloister, and accustomed for so long a period to a life of seclusion, the countess seems to have lived in great retirement, devoting herself solely to the care of her infant daughters, and intermeddling as little with public affairs as was consistent with her elevated position. The peculiar circumstances of her marriage too would necessarily make her shrink from observation; however recklessly the earl bore up against the opprobrium to which it gave rise, a feeling of penitent melancholy seems to have pervaded the spirit of his gentle consort, which neither the dignity of her situation, her attachment to her husband, nor even the tender bonds of maternal love ever enabled her fully to surmount.

After several ineffectual attempts at negotiation, Earl

¹ Geneal. Com. Fland., vol. i., Probat., p. 222.

Matthew, in the year 1167, determined, with the assistance of his brother Philip, to vindicate his title to his wife's inheritance by force of arms; and, while King Henry was engaged in a contest with Louis of France, he assembled a fleet of ships, the number of which gives us very exalted ideas of the maritime strength of Mary's dominions. Depending on his alliance with the powerful earls of Flanders, Henry had allowed his navy to sink into a state of utter neglect, and the squadron of the earl therefore approached the shores of England without impediment; but Richard de Laci, the justiciary of the kingdom, had gathered together such large bodies of the brave English militia, and posted them with such skill, on every point where a landing could be effected, that the disappointed earl, seeing an attack would be hopeless, returned back to his own dominions¹; but, in revenge, he so furiously assailed a part of Henry's army which was on its way to join the king in France, that he put them to a shameful flight².

His opposition to the English king naturally threw him into correspondence with Louis VII., and Henry meanwhile was drawing closer the bonds of an alliance with the Emperor Frederic, which would be of great service to himself, and proportionately dangerous to the King of France. During one of Matthew's frequent absences about this time, the emperor's ambassadors, travelling to the court of England, accompanied by those of the king on their return from the Imperial court, arrived at Boulogne; and no sooner did the Countess Mary hear of their arrival, than she summoned them to her presence, and closely questioned them as to the object and purport of their mission. Although the cautious ambassadors answered in as guarded a manner as possible, yet it was easy to gather that the aim of their masters was a powerful alliance against France; the

¹ Gervase, Twysden, p. 1402.

² Lambert Waterlos, Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 521.

countess did not however infringe the law of nations by arresting or even impeding them in their course, but she wrote off immediately to the French king, giving him all the particulars of the interview, and, added at the close of her epistle, "I found that the King of England is constantly seeking your hurt, wherefore I thought fit to warn you, that you may take counsel with your wise men and do what you think proper, lest the fraudulent king's impetuous presumption should hurt you¹." The unusual energy shown by the gentle Lady Mary on this occasion, seems to point out the rankling of irritated feeling with which she still regarded the English king, for it is the only instance now on record, in which she took any prominent part in state politics.

King Henry found Earl Matthew and his brother such formidable and resolute antagonists, that, after many evasions and delays, he at length determined to satisfy their demands. A convention was held at Rouen, at which he pledged himself to pay Matthew the annual sum of 1000*l.*, equal to at least 16,000*l.* of our present money, on condition of his renouncing all claims upon his wife's estate, still in the king's hands². The earl, delighted with the success of this negotiation, instantly changed sides, and entered as warmly into the cause of King Henry, as he had formerly done into that of the opposite party. Hastening to join his troops to those of the king, he solicited permission to pass through the territories of John Earl of Ponthieu; this was refused, and Matthew was compelled to go by water into Normandy; but the unfortunate Earl John had soon ample cause to repent his incivility; for the indignant Earl of Boulogne burning with revenge, persuaded the king to an immediate attack upon him, and

¹ Mary's letter to Louis in Bouquet, vol. xvi., p. 144.

² Rob. de Monte, Pistorius, vol. i., p. 905. Epist. Anon., Ibid., vol. xvi., pp. 257-8.

their combined troops laid waste his lands with fire and sword¹.

During these few later years, the wrath of the supreme pontiff against the Earl and Countess of Boulogne appears to have slumbered, as we hear nothing of his furious animosity. In truth, Pope Alexander had been too busily engaged in supporting his own claims against those of the antipope Paschal III., to attend to more remote and less important affairs. In the year 1168, however, we find him renewing his attempts against Earl Matthew, on grounds so utterly absurd in point of right, as plainly to prove the weakness of his cause. Constantia, the sister of Louis VII. of France, had been espoused to Eustace, Earl of Boulogne, the elder brother of Mary; on his death she was married again to Raymond, Earl of Toulouse, but being separated from this second husband, she had retired to the court of her brother, the French king; and now, after an interval of more than fourteen years since the death of her first husband, the Pope, at her petition, asserted a claim upon her part to the earldom of Boulogne, as the dowry assigned to her by Prince Eustace². The frivolousness of this pretext is self-evident, for Eustace had it not in his power to dispose of his maternal inheritance, which devolved of right to his brother William, in case of his dying without heirs, and, had he possessed that right, it would undoubtedly have been urged long before, in the previous quarrels between Alexander and Matthew. The influence of King Louis is clearly traceable in this attempt against the ally of England; for, when a prince is disposed to quarrel, he is never long at a loss for an excuse. Three months were allowed to Matthew, in which to renounce the earldom he had so long enjoyed, and intimations were

¹ Rob. de Monte, ut supra.

² Vaissette, *Histoire de Languedoc*, vol. iii., p. 537, et seq. Martène, *Col. Amp.*, vol. ii., p. 755.

given of the steps that would be taken in case of his non-compliance¹.

It was not likely that the bold earl would be daunted by these threats, backed as he was by the powerful alliance of the English monarch, as well as by the influence of his brother, who, on the recent death of their father, Earl Theodric, had assumed the earldom of Flanders; but the prospect of renewed hostilities with the court of Rome was distressing to the Lady Mary, who considered herself as the real cause of these disturbances, and she began to tremble for the inheritance of her daughters, should they be thus perseveringly continued. Often during the stormy period of her married life, had she sighed for the quiet repose of the cloister; as long, however, as Matthew entertained any hopes of her bringing an heir to his dominions, he would by no means consent to a separation; but seven years had now elapsed since the birth of her last daughter; these hopes had quite faded away, and he became at length less unwilling to consent to allow her to abandon her high station and retire once more to the quietude of a religious life. The stigma which still clung to him for his forcible seduction of his abbess-bride sorely nettled his high spirit, and the following circumstance is said to have greatly contributed to reconcile him to Mary's retirement. During the festivities that took place on the marriage of his sister Margaret with Baldwin, Earl of Hainault, and in which he bore a part, the Emperor Frederic I. was present, and at table, in the midst of the assembled guests, he dilated upon the enormity of Earl Matthew's conduct towards the Lady Mary, declaring that no man of respectability ought to associate with him. Earl Theodric, his father, had, on his dying bed, severely reproved him for his fault², and this remonstrance,

¹ Epist. Alex. III., Bouquet, vol. xv., p. 867.

² Oudegherst, Chron. de Flandres, p. 135.

disregarded at the time, now rushed upon his recollection. He returned home, and having, with many penitential expressions, asked forgiveness from his wife, gave his full consent for her return to the cloister¹. Of this permission the countess gladly availed herself. But she did not choose to return again to the English monastery which she had quitted so abruptly; she coveted no more the treacherous protection of Henry II., nor indeed could she hope for a favourable reception, still less for a restoration to her former rank, among the sisterhood who had been so greatly scandalized by her marriage. The place she selected for her seclusion, was the Benedictine nunnery of St. Austrebert, near Montreuil, which she entered as a simple nun in the year 1169².

After her retirement, the countess does not seem to have relinquished all connection with the affairs of the world, for her name is occasionally mentioned in public documents. Doubtless she would still look with interest upon the destinies of those to whom she was united by the closest ties, and it must have afforded her no small gratification, when, with the consent of the Pope, her two daughters, the fruit of a union uniformly stigmatised as unlawful and adulterous by the Romish Church, were formally legitimatized³. Probably, this was the result of some stipulation with the Holy See, entered into by their mother, before she consented to give colour to the charge of illegitimacy by that withdrawal from the world, which was in fact a tacit acknowledgment of the invalidity of her marriage-vows. Notwithstanding the affection with which she was regarded, her retirement was hailed with universal joy, for the interdict which had so long darkly hung over the province was now

¹ Oudegherst, Chron. de Flanders, pp. 137, 138.

² Gallia Christina, vol. x., col. 1318. Anselm. Gemblac., p. 979, Pistorius, vol. i.

³ Sandford, p. 44.

removed, and the people once again admitted to the full and free exercise of their religious rites, flocked in crowds to the re-opened churches¹.

The melancholy nun had scarcely become installed in her new situation when Earl Matthew led to the nuptial altar Eleanor of Vermandois, sister to Elizabeth, his brother's wife. In this second marriage ambition seems again to have been his ruling motive. The Earl of Vermandois having no sons, his lands were inherited by his daughters, and as the eldest, Elizabeth, had no offspring, he hoped to secure the inheritance to his posterity by means of a marriage with the second daughter²; but he was again doomed to disappointment; for, although Eleanor gave birth to several children, they all died in infancy³. The earl still spoke of Mary as his wife, even after his second marriage, for in the year 1173, we find him bestowing lands on the church of St. Judoc, "with the consent of the Countess Mary his wife, and his daughters⁴."

In the long contests which took place between Henry II. and his eldest son, (called by the chroniclers of the day, Henry III., from his having received, during his father's lifetime, the crown which his early death prevented him from long wearing,) the versatile Matthew again forsook his old friend and benefactor, and took part with the rebel prince. Young Henry promised him, in return for his assistance, the earldom of Mortagne, with lands of considerable value in England, and received his anticipatory homage for them⁵. The zeal of Earl Matthew did not evaporate in mere words; in conjunction with his brother, the Earl of Flanders, the King of France, and

¹ Andr. Marcian Chron., Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 422.

² Miræus, p. 756, Lamb. Waterlos, p. 514, Rob. de Monte, p. 314, Bouquet, vol. xiii.

³ Geneal. Com. Fland., Mart. Thes. Anecd., vol. iii., col. 388.

⁴ Baluze, Hist. de la Maison d'Auvergne, vol. i., p. 89; vol. ii., Preuves, p. 97.

⁵ Brompton, p. 1084, and Gervase, p. 1424, Twysden.

Prince Henry himself, he entered Normandy at the head of a powerful army, but they had made comparatively little progress, when the sudden death of Matthew put a stop to their enterprises. He received a wound in the knee from an arrow, at the siege of Driencourt, which shortly afterwards proved fatal. His death took place on St. James's day, 1173; an immediate judgment inflicted upon him, we are told, by the offended saint for the irreverence with which he had been treated, since it was on St. James's day that he had sworn an oath of alliance with Henry, against whom he was now in arms, and, to make the matter worse, the oath had been taken at the altar of the abbey of Reading, where St. James's hand, a most precious and sacred relic, was deposited¹.

His death was so passionately regretted by his brother, Earl Philip, who looked upon him as his heir, that, after having solemnized for him a pompous funeral at the church of St. Judoc in Ponthieu, he abandoned the campaign and returned home to Flanders². He undertook the guardianship of the orphan daughters of his deceased brother, the elder of whom, Ida, immediately assumed the title of Countess of Boulogne; it would seem that they took up their abode with their uncle Philip, for, in one of his deeds in reference to Boulogne, in which their names appear as witnesses, he states that he himself is their tutor³.

In the year 1181, the young Countess Ida was married to Gerard, Earl of Gueldres, but the bridegroom only survived his nuptials a few months⁴; and his death was

¹ Ralph de Diceto, p. 571, and Gervase, p. 1426, Twysden.

² Anselm. Gemblac., p. 981. Meyerus, Annal. Fland., p. 51. Geneal. Com. Fland., Martène, Thes. Anec., vol. iii., p. 389. Gul. Newbrig., Hearne's edit., vol. i., p. 201.

³ Ured. Gen., vol. i., Probat., p. 222.

⁴ Anselm. Gemblac., p. 989, Gul. Andres, p. 568, Bouquet, vol. xviii.

followed, in the ensuing year, by that of her mother, the Lady Mary of Blois, at the comparatively early age of forty-five. She was buried with the utmost privacy in the nunnery of St. Austrebert¹. Her funeral was conducted without more ceremony than that observed at the obsequies of any other of the saintly sisterhood, without any one of her own kindred to shed a tear over the obscure tomb where, far away from her maternal ancestors, and still further from any of the race of the mighty Conqueror from whom she could boast her proud paternal descent, this royal daughter of England found her last resting-place², after having spent thirteen years in her second seclusion, and survived Earl Matthew upwards of nine.

The Countess Ida did not inherit her mother's amiable disposition. Her character is said to have been light and weak almost to imbecility³. Her position, however, as heiress of the earldom of Boulogne, procured her many suitors. She was married, after the early death of her first husband, to Bertold of Saringes, and afterwards to Reginald de Trie, Lord of Dammartin, by whom she had a daughter, Matilda, who succeeded her in the earldom, and became, by her second marriage, Queen of Portugal⁴, but her line failed on the death of her daughter and only child without issue⁵.

Matilda, the younger daughter of Mary of Blois, was given in marriage, by her uncle, Earl Philip, to Henry, Duke of Louvaine and Brabant, and the city of Brussels

¹ Chron. Andrensis Monast., Acher's Spicilegium, vol. ii., p. 812.

² Anselm. Gemblac., p. 991, Pist., vol. i.

³ Lambert, Hist. Earls Ardres et Ghisnes, Ludewig, Reliquiæ Diplom., vol. viii., pp. 492-3.

⁴ Teatro Historico de la Casa de Sousa, par Manuel Sousa Mareyra, p. 320. Ured. Gen. Prob., vol. i., pp. 224-5. Her will is given in Miræus, Diplom. Belg., book i., p. 395.

⁵ Geneal. Reg. Port. ap. Schottum Rer. Hisp. Script. Ant., vol. ii., p. 258.

with many other important places, were bestowed as her dower¹. She became the mother of a large family of three sons and four daughters², and her posterity, on the failure of that of her elder sister, succeeded to the earldom of Boulogne³.

¹ The marriage articles are preserved in Miræus, *Annal. Belgici*, and in Ured. Gen., vol. i., Prob., p. 226.

² *Geneal. Gul. Bast.*, Bouquet, vol. xii., p. 570. *Geneal. Com. Fland.*, vol. i., p. 30. Hoveden, p. 323.

³ A learned member of the Antiquarian Society, who has eminently distinguished himself by his researches into Anglo-Norman history, has suggested to the author an opinion, which he strongly upholds, that King Stephen had another daughter, not yet recognized, in Eufemia, wife of Alberic or Aubrey de Vere, the first Earl of Oxford. The grounds of the supposition are,

First, that Eufemia is called by King Stephen, in one of his charters, "Comtissa Mortain," a title hereditary in his family.—Cole MS., vol. lix., p. 219.

Secondly, that the countess bestowed upon the church of St. Mary of Colne land in Iclinton, which she says King Stephen and Queen Matilda gave her "in free dowry," Ibid., pp. 112, 219, 241, which Iclinton seems to be identical with Ickleton, a parish in the hundred of Whittlesford, which was of the honour of Earl Eustace of Boulogne at the time of the compilation of Domesday, and descended from him to Queen Matilda.

Third, that Queen Matilda died at the castle of Heddingham, in Essex, the residence of Eufemia's husband, Aubrey de Vere. In reference to the first of these reasons, it may be remarked that it would be singular for King Stephen to bestow upon a daughter one of his titles, during his own life-time, and that of his son William, (who is mentioned in the charter in question), and that there is no other instance on record of the title of Mortain being given to any member of his family, excepting in connection with the actual possession of the earldom, which, on his death, devolved on his son William, who from that time, but *not previously*, assumed the title of Earl of Mortain; and as the charter in which the title occurs is but a copy made by Cole from a chartulary not now to be met with, and in which the word Mortain, or rather, as Cole writes it, Mortaira, is, in all probability, his own rendering of the contraction Mōrt., it is open to doubt as to whether Mortain was the word originally meant. The second reason lies also open to the question of identity between Iclinton, or, as Cole transcribes it, Clinton, or Clintane, (the initial letter being seemingly omitted, because in the original chartulary it was left blank to be illuminated, or the illuminations were worn away by the damp) and Ickleton. But supposing the places to be identical, which seems very likely, from the circumstance of the lands in Iclintane being in the possession of the king and queen, it still does not inevitably follow, because they bestowed a portion upon the Countess Eufemia, that she

must necessarily have been their daughter; though it does prove an affectionate intimacy to have subsisted between them, which is all that can be deduced with certainty from the circumstance of Queen Matilda's death, having taken place at Eufemia's residence of Heddingham. In the charters of Eufemia granting the above-named lands to Colne Priory, though she mentions the king and queen, there is not the slightest allusion to any relationship existing between them. The author must, however, leave it to wiser heads than her own to solve a genealogical mystery, into which she confesses herself unable further satisfactorily to penetrate.

MATILDA,

ELDEST DAUGHTER OF HENRY II.

Popularity of name—Birth—Early life—Royal nursery—Marriage embassy—Early struggles of Henry the Lion—His extensive dominions—Marriage agreed upon—Matilda sent to Saxony—Nuptials—Commemorative picture—City of Brunswick—Visit to Rouen—Dedication of churches—Visit to Bavaria—Henry's journey to the Holy Land—Matilda's character and occupations—Birth of her daughter—Splendid progress and return of Henry—Visit of the emperor and empress—Relics—Henry's frequent absences—Milanese expedition—Birth of young Henry—Quarrels with the emperor—Excommunication—Matilda obtains repeal—Provides for Bishop Ulric—Her influence with Henry—Children—Attack on Brunswick—Matilda respectfully treated by emperor—Henry's submission—Exile—They go to Normandy—Honourably received—Bertrand de Born—Henry's pilgrimage—Departure for England—Liberation of Matilda's mother—Birth of her son William—King intercedes for Henry—Return to Saxony—Diminished estates—Fresh exile—Death and burial of Matilda—Her statue—Portraits—Death of Duke Henry—Their children—Romantic marriage of young Henry—William, ancestor of House of Brunswick.

THE popularity of the name of Matilda among our early Norman sovereigns, is rather inconvenient, as, from its frequent recurrence, it may tend in some degree to create confusion in royal biographies. During the comparatively short period that elapsed between the conquest and the reign of Henry II., three queens and three princesses of England bore this name, rendered so illustrious from its having been that of the queen of William the Conqueror. We are now about to introduce our readers to a fourth

Matilda, who, it is hoped, will be proved a worthy descendant of her royal ancestresses, especially of that one, whom in character as well as in name, she strikingly resembled,—we allude to her great-grandmother, Matilda of Scotland, the gentle and pious consort of Henry I.

In one particular, the present princess has a special claim upon our regard. She is the direct ancestress of the house of Brunswick, to which England is indebted for its last, and as every British heart must earnestly hope, its longest and greatest, and best dynasty of sovereigns.

The Princess Matilda was the eldest daughter, but the third child of Henry II. and Eleanora of Aquitaine, and was born at London, in the year 1156¹. Although the queen might naturally be wishful that the infant should bear her own name, yet Henry Fitz-empress chose that she should be christened after his august mother. She was baptized in the priory of the Holy Trinity at Aldgate, which was founded by Queen Matilda of Scotland, Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, the primate of the realm, officiating on the occasion².

From her earliest infancy the little princess was the constant companion of her mother, and a strong attachment was cemented between them, which neither their early separation, nor their extreme dissimilarity of character, was ever able to efface or to diminish.

In the autumn of 1160, when Matilda was about four years old, she accompanied her mother and her brother Henry to Rouen, whither they had been summoned by the king, and where they remained till the month of December, when the royal family removed to Mans, and after celebrating the Christmas festival with great splendour, returned again to England³.

¹ Diceto, Twysden, p. 531. Paris, vol. i., p. 95. Rob. de Monte, Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 298.

² Hearne's William of Newbridge, p. 706.

³ Rob. de Monte, Bouquet, p. 305.

Though Eleanora of Aquitaine was herself a talented and learned princess, yet she is far from being a pattern with regard to the training of her children. She seems to have indulged their every wish, and not even to have thwarted their caprices, while the frequent migrations of the royal nursery must have been a sad impediment to any set plans of education,—if such were attempted. She had the principal control over them in their childhood, the orders for the payments of the expenses of the royal infants being given as frequently by her as by the king himself¹. Peter of Blois, the vivacious chaplain of Henry II., whose letters contain much curious information concerning the person and court of his royal master, tells us that it was easier to trace the course of an eagle in the sky, than that of a king in England², and yet we find that Henry was generally accompanied by his queen and children. This learned priest remonstrated very seriously with his master upon his neglect of the education of the royal children, especially Prince Henry, the heir to the throne, who he entreats may be provided with a suitable tutor, and instructed in letters³.

The result of this over-indulgence was painfully evident in the headstrong wilfulness of the sons of Henry and Eleanora, but their daughters were more fortunate, for they appear to have escaped uninjured from such injudicious treatment, perhaps from their having left home when quite young. In her infancy a negotiation took place for the marriage of Matilda with the son of the Emperor Frederic I., which proceeded so far that the parties were actually contracted to each other, but it afterwards fell through for some unexplained reason⁴. The Marquis of Montferrat also wrote to the king, offering him his assist-

¹ Pipe Roll, 9th Henry II., Record Office, Carlton Ride.

² Epist. Pet. Bles., No. XLI.

³ Ibid., No. LXVII.

⁴ Letter of Henry II. to the College of Cardinals, Bouquet, vol. xv., p. 846.

ance and support in his quarrels with Becket, provided his son might be married to one of King Henry's daughters; but the proposal was not accepted¹.

In the year 1165, Matilda with her mother and Prince Richard, again went into Normandy, whither they had been preceded by the king²; but they soon returned to England, and took up their abode in the palace of Westminster. Here Henry received an important embassy, despatched on the part of Henry Duke of Saxony and Bavaria, and headed by Reginald Archbishop of Cologne, one of the most powerful nobles of Germany, and chancellor of the empire. The object of their mission was to solicit the hand of the "Lady Matilda, daughter of the king," for their master³, and they brought with them a large store of gold and silver to aid them in their negotiations⁴. The princess was at this time just nine years old, while her noble suitor, now in his thirty-sixth year⁵, had long played a conspicuous part on the theatre of European politics. Henry, surnamed, from the fearless boldness of his temper, "the Lion," was by far the most powerful of the uncrowned princes of the age in which he lived, and his birth, his wealth, his talents, and the extent of his dominions, rendered him the admiration, and often the envy too, of all the surrounding princes. His father was Henry, surnamed the Proud or the Magnanimous, Duke of Bavaria, a descendant, through the Guelphs, of the noble house of Este; and his mother, Gertrude, was the daughter and only child of the Emperor Lothaire II., Duke of Saxony; so that Henry was rightful

¹ Life and Letters of St. Thomas of Canterbury, published by Christian Lupus from the Vatican MS., p. 216.

² Rob. de Monte, ut supra, p. 309.

³ Diceto, p. 539, Twysden.

⁴ Chron. Slav. Leibnitz, vol. ii., p. 626.

⁵ He was born in the year 1129, as is proved by the fact that he was sixty-six years old at the time of his death, which took place in 1195. Gerard Stederburg Meibom, vol. i., p. 436. Scheidius, *Origines Guelficæ*, vol. iii., p. 49.

heir to both these dukedoms. His early life was one of ceaseless trouble and commotion. Henry the Proud had been anxious to secure for himself the imperial crown, on the death of his father-in-law Lothaire, but, failing in the attempt, he naturally incurred the suspicious hatred of his successful rival, Conrad III., who took occasion, on some frivolous pretext, to deprive him of both Saxony and Bavaria.

Affairs were in this position when the death of Henry the Proud, in the year 1139, left his son, then only ten years old, to struggle with these accumulated difficulties¹. The young earl found, in the strong attachment of his Saxon subjects, the protection and safeguard of his earlier years; his mother was his guardian, and in his name administered the affairs of the province which he inherited; for, though nominally forfeited, the devotion of the Saxons to their ancient house was so strong that the reality of the power was in the hands of the Duchess Gertrude and her son. Aware of this, the Emperor Conrad, in 1142, chose to revoke the grant of Saxony, which he had made to the Marquis Adelbert, usually known by the surname of the Bear, and to bestow upon young Henry the formal investiture of the duchy. At the same time, however, he contrived a marriage between the Lady Gertrude, mother of the duke, and his own brother, Henry, Marquis of Austria, on whom he conferred the dukedom of Bavaria², so that any attempts of Henry to recover his paternal inheritance would necessitate his taking up arms against his mother and her husband; but this well-laid scheme missed its aim, for Gertrude died the following year³. The daring temper of Henry was conspicuous even at this early period, for in all his epistles, excepting those

¹ Arnold Lubec. *Chron. Slavorum*, Leibnitz, vol. ii., p. 585.

² *Chron. Slav.*, p. 585. Botho, *Chron. Pict.*, Leibnitz, vol. iii., p. 342. Laurentius Hochwart, *Oefellius Rer. Boicar. Script. Ant.*, vol. i., p. 194.

³ Scheidius, *Origines Guelficæ*, vol. iii., pp. 11-13.

to the emperor, in which the latter title was omitted, he styled himself "duke of Saxony and Bavaria," long before either dukedom had been in reality conferred upon him. In the year 1147, he was married to his first wife, Clementia, daughter of Bertold, Duke of Thuringia, but after a union of seventeen years, this marriage was dissolved: the never-failing pretext of consanguinity was as usual alleged, but matrimonial quarrels which had arisen, aggravated by the disappointment of Duke Henry that his wife had only brought him a daughter, were the real causes of the separation¹.

A spirit like that of Henry the Great or the Lion, could never be satisfied without the full restoration of his paternal inheritance; and he was earnest and persevering in his suit at the Imperial Court, for the dukedom of Bavaria, which, in 1154, was at last ceded to him². Besides these two duchies, those of Westphalia, Angria, and the principalities of Brunswick and Luneburgh, he had conquered tracts of land north of the Elbe, extensive enough to erect there three bishoprics, the investiture of which was ceded to him by the Emperor³. "And now," says one of his numerous panegyrists, "increased in power, and illustrious by his two-fold dukedom, he turned all eyes upon himself, so that the kings and princes of Germany feared him even more than they revered him. No war was waged, no illustrious council held, no affair completed which he adorned not with his presence, counsel, and authority; and when his aid was given, whatever was undertaken for the State, succeeded more happily⁴." He is said to have possessed forty cities and sixty-seven castles,

¹ Chron. Slav., pp. 593, 626. Aren. Frisingen, Leibnitz, vol. iii., p. 672. Albertus Kranzius Saxonia, p. 153.

² The charter of grant, dated 1156, is printed in Canisius, Thesaurus Monument., vol. iv., pp. 173-4. See also Heineccius, Antiquitates, Goslar., p. 149.

³ Eckhardus, Henrici Leonis Auctoritas in Episcopis Constituendis, 4to., 1732.

⁴ Hechtius de Henrici Leonis insignibus, p. 14.

besides many unwall'd villages¹. The four German verses in which he used to describe the extent of his proud domains, have been thus translated:—

“Henry the Lion is my name,
Through all the earth I spread my fame;
For from the Elbe unto the Rhine,
From Hartz unto the sea—ALL'S MINE.²”

Such was the prince whom the wide-spread fame of the English monarch induced to seek his alliance. Little attention was paid by either party to the great disparity of age between the duke and his projected bride. King Henry was flattered with the prospect of so brilliant a match for his daughter, and willingly gave his consent. The ambassadors were received in great state as befitted their rank, for they were looked upon as the noblest embassy that had ever yet arrived in England. Most of the nobles of the court went out to meet them on their approach to London; but the clergy were not so complaisant. The Emperor and all the Germans then adhered to the cause of the antipope Paschal, while the English acknowledged the authority of Alexander III.; and so great was the horror occasioned in the minds of the orthodox priests by the presence of these schismatics, that every altar on which they solemnized mass, was thrown down as thereby polluted³: respect for the king, however, prevented any open insults being offered to them.

The usual pledges were given on both sides for the

¹ Everard de Eccles. Gandersheim, Leibnitz, vol. iii., p. 159. Chron. Luneb., Ibid., p. 173. Frag. Chron. Bardev., Ibid., p. 217. Rob. de Monte, Pist., vol. i., p. 932.

² Gibbon's Antiquity of the House of Brunswick, p. 203. The original runs as follows:

“Heinrich der Low bin ich genant,
In aller Welt und Weit bekant;
Von der Elbe an den Rein
Vom Harz bis an die See war mein.”

Anderson's Royal Genealogies, p. 515.

³ Matt. Par., vol. i., p. 104. Diceto, Twysden, p. 539.

fulfilment of the contract¹; but on account of the extreme youth of Matilda, permission was obtained that she should remain for some time longer at home. From the period that her espousals were decided upon, the queen-mother busied herself in the preparation of everything necessary for the suitable equipment of the young bride; and the tax which, by ancient usage, was levied on the marriage of the king's eldest daughter, provided her with ample funds for the purpose². A few particulars of the Lady Matilda's trousseau and equipage are preserved in the Pipe Roll of the 13th of Henry II., 1167. Her bridal wardrobe, exclusive of jewels, with which she was munificently provided³, cost 63*l.* 13*s.* 7*d.*, equal to twenty times the same sum in the present day; 28*l.* 14*s.* was paid for gold to gild her plate; 26*l.* 15*s.* 4*d.*, for twenty-eight pairs of coffers for her, which, from their costliness, were probably of silver, and jewelled. She had also seven saddles, covered with scarlet and gilded, with gilded reins, which cost 14*l.* 13*s.* 8*d.*⁴; and 1*l.* 16*s.* each, was given for several palfreys for her⁵. The greater part of this intervening time was spent by the king in Normandy, while Eleanora, with her children, kept court at the summer-palace of Woodstock⁶; but they must have gone over again to Normandy, for we are told that, in the autumn of 1167, the queen and the Lady Matilda returned to England⁷. This was the farewell visit of the princess, but it was a very short one; for the same year, she again set sail from Dover⁸ for Normandy, on her way to her new abode; and

¹ Scheidins, vol. iii., p. 64. Diceto, ut supra.

² Radulphus Niger, from Stevens' Hist. Account of Taxes, p. 30. Madox, Hist. Exchequer, i., 572. Pipe Rolls, 13 and 14 Henry II.

³ Albertus Kranzius Saxonia, p. 153.

⁴ Pipe Roll, 13 Henry II., London and Middlesex.

⁵ Ibid., Berkshire, Pipe Roll, 14 Henry II., Hon. Wil. Peverel, Windsor and Kent.

⁶ Miss Strickland's Queens, vol. i., p. 326.

⁷ Rob. de Monte, Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 311.

⁸ Gervase, Twysden, p. 1403.

many a long year rolled over the head of the royal maiden, before, in woe and exile, she once more saw the white cliffs of her native land. The care of the princess' passage was assigned to Robert, Sheriff of Kent. Three vessels from Shoreham were engaged to convey her and her train¹; and the sums of 15*l.* 5*s.* 6*d.*, and afterward of 3*l.* 3*s.* 4*d.*, were paid to him for her expenses². The Christmas was celebrated by King Henry and his family with great pomp, at the new hall in the palace of Argenton, where farewell feasts were given in honour of the Lady Matilda. The profuse supplies of beer, wine, and venison, sent over to Normandy by the Sheriff of Hampshire, corroborate the statements of the contemporary chroniclers as to the joyous hilarity with which these feasts were kept³. The departure of the princess took place almost immediately after⁴. The Earls of Pembroke and Arundel were appointed as her guardians; and with a splendid equipage and an immense sum of money which she took with her as her dower, the youthful *fiancée* set out on her journey towards Saxony⁵. She had advanced as far as Minden, in Westphalia, when she was met by her bridegroom, and his daughter the Lady Gertrude, then the widow of Frederic, Duke of Swabia, who was considerably older than her juvenile step-mother. Gertrude occupied at this time an important place in her father's court; for, as his only child, she was his acknowledged heiress, and treated with much respect. It cannot therefore be supposed that she regarded with any very friendly feeling this second wife, who might prove such a rival to her present state, as well as interfere so seriously with her future prospects.

Minden was the place fixed upon by Duke Henry for

¹ Pipe Roll, 13 Henry II., Sussex.

² Pipe Roll, 14 Henry II., Kent.

³ Pipe Roll, 14 Henry II., Hampshire.

⁴ Robert de Monte, *ut supra*.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Albertus Kranzius Saxonia, p. 153.

the solemnization of his nuptials, and the Archbishop of Werner was the prelate chosen to officiate at the ceremony, which was performed in great state at the altar of St. Peter's in the cathedral church, on the 1st of February, 1168¹. A picture representing this marriage-scene was painted at the time, and afterwards hung up in the church of St. Blasius at Brunswick, which is engraved by Scheidius in his *Origines Guelficæ*. In spite of her juvenility, Matilda is represented as tall and womanly in her appearance; and Henry being young-looking, considering his years, the difference between their ages is less strikingly apparent. The dress worn by the duke on the important occasion is a richly-embroidered tunic reaching to the ankles, surmounted by a cloak of white satin or velvet, the border all round cut into deep scallops and embroidered, thrown open in front, and having a deep falling cape which covers the waist: on his head is a low cap with a broad band richly set with gems, from the centre of which rise three ostrich feathers. Matilda's dress is not quite so picturesque; her features are remarkably regular and well formed, but round her face she wears a full white frill, and not a particle of hair is to be seen. A coronet of strawberry leaves and pearls adorns her brow, from behind which depends a long white veil, wrapped rather ungracefully round her throat and bosom; her under-robe she wears very long, trimmed with fur, and confined at the waist by a narrow zone, and over this a large white mantle of silk or satin, nearly enveloping her person in its folds, finished at the neck by a deep frill. She holds in the taper fingers of her right hand, the plight-ring—a golden hoop, adorned in the centre with a magnificent brilliant; but she seems much at a loss as to what is to be done with it, while there is a most laughable expression of sentimental devotion in the features and

¹ Herman Lerbec. in *Chron. Schawenb.* ap. Meibom, vol. i., p. 506. *Orig. Guelf.*, vol. iii., p. 69.

attitude of the gallant bridegroom by her side¹. Henry is said to have been remarkably handsome, of a fair complexion, but with black hair, dark eyes full of fire, and an animated and expressive countenance²; strong and agile in body, from his early training, for "instead of being brought up in idleness and luxury, he had devoted himself to the active exercises of riding, throwing the dart, and contending with his equals in feats of arms; but still stronger in mind; of a temper modest, yet severe, preferring to *be*, rather than *appear*, good or great³."

Henry evidently looked upon his marriage as an affair of considerable importance; we are told that he was greatly exhilarated at the prospect of it, and he commemorated its celebration, not only by the painting of the above-named picture, but by bestowing on the church where it took place some lands, and what he regarded as a still more valuable gift, namely, the arm of St. George the Martyr, richly adorned with gems⁴. Scheidius tells us he has seen this arm, and he gives the charter, in which the lands are said to be granted "with the consent of the Lady Gertrude, our heir," and which is dated at Minden, the 1st of February, in the year of our Lord 1168, "when Henry, Duke of Saxony and Bavaria, there married Matilda, daughter of the King of England," thus fixing indubitably the precise date of the marriage, which almost all our English genealogical historians place in 1167⁵; probably from the confusion caused at this time

¹ Another copy of this curious engraving, as well as of many others very rarely to be met with, connected with the history of the Guelph family, is preserved among the MSS. of the Royal Library, under the title of *Epitome Guelfica*. See the vignette of the present volume.

² *Morena Res Laudenses*, Leibnitz, vol. i., p. 848. *Raumer's Geschichte der Hohenstaufen*, vol. ii., p. 153. *Origines Guelficæ*, vol. iii., pp. 157-8.

³ *Arenp. Frising.*, p. 671.

⁴ *Chron. Schawenb.*, Meibom, vol. i., p. 506. *Chron. Osnaburgh*, *Ibid.*, vol. ii., p. 210.

⁵ *Orig. Guelf.*, vol. iii., Prob., No. LIX. Gervase, who is generally an exact chronologist, gives the true date here. See Twysden, p. 1413.

by the different periods of commencement of the legal and historical year; the former dating from March, whilst the latter began in January, or sometimes at Christmas.

Almost immediately afterwards, Duke Henry led his bride to his own capital city of Brunswick, where the nuptial feasts were renewed and prolonged, with great magnificence for several weeks¹.

Everything the young duchess saw around her in her new home was calculated to give her the most vivid impressions of the activity, as well as the power and, perchance too, a little of the pride of her husband. The year previous to her arrival, the walls of Brunswick had been repaired, and in many places rebuilt, and the moat made deeper and wider, so that the city had much the appearance of a strong fortification. The ducal palace itself, an ancient and extensive building, had undergone many improvements, while immediately in front of it towered the column of the LÖWENSTEIN, surmounted by an enormous lion of brass², erected by Henry the Lion, in proud commemoration of the surname which his courage had so universally won for him³. The column was square, built of very large stones, and ornamented in front with three Doric pillars. We may easily imagine that the fierce-looking beast which stood on the top, would be regarded with something like a feeling of undefined dread by the youthful bride, who was taught to look up to it as the characteristic symbol of her newly-

¹ Alb. Stadensis, edit., 1627, p. 193.

² Chron. Rythm. Leibnitz, vol. iii., p. 54. This pillar was restored to its original state in the year 1616, by Frederic Ulric, Duke of Brunswick, and is engraved in Scheidius, vol. iii., Table A. Kruger de Originibus Brunswici, p. 44.

³ A fable has been invented about his owing this surname to the circumstance that when in the Holy Land he saw a lion fighting with a serpent, and after having destroyed the serpent, took possession of the lion, and kept it with him as his constant companion. This absurd tale is refuted by its anachronism, for Henry bore the title of Lion from his youth, long before his visit to the East, and similar cognomens were by no means unfrequent at that period.

wedded lord, until a more lengthened intercourse had proved to her, that if Henry had much of the courage of the lion in his composition, he was not devoid of its magnanimity and nobleness¹. This column is far from being the only token of the pride with which the duke wore the cognomen of the Lion: one of the cities which he built was called the Löwenstadt²; a very large number of his coins had lions on the reverse, in almost every possible diversity of attitude³, and several of his seals bear the same emblem. Engravings of many of these are extant in the *Origines Guelfica*, and of a still larger number in the Manuscript in the Royal Library already referred to, entitled *Epitome Guelfica*.

Soon after their marriage, Henry left his duchess to enjoy the sole society of her step-daughter, with whom she appears to have lived on the most friendly terms, whilst he went to attend a convention of the princes of the empire at Frankfort, at which he was appointed an associate with the Archbishops of Cologne and Mayence, on a secret embassy to his father-in-law, the English king, and also to Louis, King of France, in order to arrange terms for the consolidation of a general peace. The duke did not set forth on his journey direct from Frankfort, as did the other ambassadors⁴, and it is probable that he first returned to his capital for the purpose of taking his bride with him to visit her parents. On their arrival at Cambray, the embassy were met and handsomely entertained by the Earl of Flanders; Louis, however, refused to receive them, because, as the adherents of the antipope Paschal, he considered them as heretics and schismatics.

¹ Botho's Chron. Pict., Brunswick, Leibnitz, vol. iii., pp. 343-4. Chron. Luneburgh, ap. Leibnitz, vol. iii., p. 173.

² Chron. Schawenburgh, Meibom., vol. i., p. 504. Helmold, Ibid., p. 527. Grüber, Essai Hist., cap. xv.

³ It continued to figure on the Brunswick coins until it was superseded by the white horse of Saxony. Molanus, Medals of Brunswick-Luneburgh. Hechtius, de Insig. Henr. Leon., p. 50.

⁴ God. Coloniensis, Mon. St. Pantal, Freher, vol. i., p. 339.

King Henry also supported the cause of Alexander III., but he was less scrupulous; and, flattered with the mark of attention paid to him by his new son-in-law, he received them with much courtesy and kindness. They were splendidly accommodated and entertained at the Norman court, where they remained for some months, not returning to Germany before the early part of the following year, 1169¹, when they took their departure laden with presents, by the munificence of the English king. So determined was Henry to treat and dismiss them handsomely, that, his funds being rather low, he sent for some rich Jews from England, and having imprisoned them, he compelled the unfortunate men to produce the sum of 5000 marks, as the price of their liberation².

This year were solemnized the espousals between the Lady Gertrude of Saxony and Canute, son of Woldemar, King of Denmark³. She did not, however, go to reside with her husband till several years afterwards; a plain intimation that her position at her father's court was not a disagreeable one. Probably too, as long as she remained his sole heiress, she might think it prudent to maintain, as far as she could, her German connections.

The year 1170 was signalized by the dedication of several churches, at which the duke and duchess, with the Lady Gertrude, were present. Whenever the brief pauses from external conflict permitted, Duke Henry showed himself a worthy son of the Church, by the number and value of his endowments⁴. In his charters of donation he tells us all these things were done, "with the assent of the most glorious Lady Matilda, Duchess

¹ Rob. de Monte, p. 312, Lambert Waterlos, p. 527, Bouquet, vol. xiii. Gervase, p. 1403, Twysden.

² Gervase, col. 1403.

³ Orig. Guelf., vol. iii., p. 169.

⁴ Hechtius, de Henr. Leo. Insig., p. 14.

of Bavaria and Saxony, and also with the pious assent of the Lady Gertrude, daughter and heir of the duke¹."

In the following year, Henry determined to gratify his own conjugal pride and the wishes of a powerful class of his subjects, by introducing the young duchess to his Bavarian nobles, and for this purpose he held a court at Moseburgh, which was most splendidly and numerously attended. A deed of gift to the monastery of Aumont, still existing, subscribed by the whole court, enables us to give the numbers of those present; which were, two marquises, eleven counts, and forty-nine barons, all Bavarians, besides the usual Saxon attendants of the ducal household. All these, according to the Bavarian fashion, underwent the ceremony of being *dragged by the ear*, in token of their having witnessed the deed². This period was far from being one of undisturbed repose, for the jealousy of the duke's neighbours was continually stirring up petty annoyances, and it was not till after the emperor had interfered several times, and in full diet commanded the princes to keep the peace, threatening them with his vengeance in case of non-compliance, that perfect tranquillity could be restored.

Among the many ambitious schemes of Henry the Lion, the most favourite one was the embellishment of his capital city of Brunswick, and he set about the erection of a church, that should be splendid enough to serve as the memorial of his wealth and liberality, and at last be a fitting mausoleum for his dust³. In this undertaking Matilda was so active a participant, that she is frequently styled the foundress of the church⁴; but the

¹ Orig. Guelf., vol. iii., Prob. lxii.

² "Hi sunt testes *per aurem tracti*," are the words of the charter. Hund. Stemmatograph. Bavar., tom. i., p. 4.

³ Chron. Rythmicum, Brunswick, p. 52. Chron. Hild., . . 793, Leibnitz, vol. ii.

⁴ Grüber, Essai sur Henri le Lion, Royal MS. press mark, 103 C. 8, No. IX. Chron. St. Blasius, Kruger de Orig. Brunswic, p. 52.

structure had not proceeded very far, before another project took possession of the mind of her lord. This was a journey to the Holy Land¹—not as the knights of old, with lance and banner, to force his way at the sword's point; for the peace that had for some time subsisted between the Christians and infidels rendered this unnecessary—but as a pilgrim, to pay his homage at the shrine of the hallowed sepulchre, “that his feet might stand and his knees bend, where once the feet of his Saviour had stood².” He accordingly began to make his preparations to perform the journey, in a manner befitting his rank: he accumulated a vast amount of treasure, and summoned all the principal nobles of Saxony to attend him. Before he took his departure, he made every necessary provision for the comfort and protection of his consort during his absence. She was guarded all the more jealously that there now began to appear hopes of her bringing an heir to the duchy; passionately desirous as Henry was to have a son, it seems somewhat singular that he should have undertaken so long a pilgrimage at such a juncture; but, probably, his arrangements were too far completed to allow of his receding, and he might hope to be back in time for the important [event]. On the 6th of January, 1172, he bid adieu to his young wife, and, accompanied by a noble train of 1500 knights, set forth for Ratisbon, whence, on the 2nd of February, they began their journey eastward³.

Meanwhile two of his most trustworthy nobles, Count Egbert of Wolfenbuttel and Henry of Luneburgh, were appointed to attend exclusively the person of the duchess, and to see that her every wish was obeyed⁴. The Lady Gertrude had previously gone to Denmark to join her

¹ Chron. Stederburg, Leibnitz, vol. i., p. 858. Frag. Geneal. Duc. Brunsw., Ibid., vol. ii., p. 19.

² Compil. Chronol., Leibn., vol. ii., p. 66.

³ Chron. Slav., p. 630.

⁴ Orig. Guelf., vol. iii., pp. 73-4. Chron. Slav., p. 630.

long-plighted spouse, so that Matilda was left to keep her solitary state in the ducal palace of Brunswick. No political power seems to have been confided to her, and the manner in which she passed her time during the absence of her lord gives us a very pleasing picture of her character, and vividly recalls to our memory the virtues of her pious ancestress Queen Matilda of Scotland, to whom, in the meekness, and purity, and benevolence of her character, she bore so strong a resemblance. Though left alone so young, she carefully avoided anything like levity of deportment, and the graceful but retiring dignity of her manners commanded universal admiration. She was a most munificent benefactress of the poor, often attending in person to the supply of their wants, and where this was impracticable, contributing liberally towards the erection of hospitals and other beneficent institutions for their relief; she was likewise very earnest and devout in the observance of religious ordinances, and she attended daily the masses which she caused to be offered up for the safe return of her spouse. She superintended, too, the progress of the erection of the cathedral of Brunswick, which had been commenced by Duke Henry immediately previous to his leaving home, and which, under her auspices, was brought to a completion before his return. Her works of piety are spoken of in the most rapturous strains by the contemporary Saxon chroniclers, who assure us that her fame was spread far and wide, and that, illustrious as she was by birth and marriage, she was still more illustrious by her deeds of charity¹.

But the active employments with which she thus beguiled her hours of solitude were suspended for a while by the birth of a daughter, which took place within half a year of the departure of her lord, when the young

¹ Chron. Slav., p. 630. Compil. Chron., Leibnitz, vol. ii., p. 66, Albertus Kranzius, Saxonia, p. 155.

mother had only just attained her sixteenth year. It may be that Matilda would have felt still greater gratification in the prospect of presenting her infant to her spouse on his return, had that infant been the long-wished-for heir to his vast domains. As it was, however, she was too happy in the performance of her new and interesting duties, to experience more than a passing feeling of regret, for she was ever a most devoted mother, and paid more personal attention to her children than is usual in those of her elevated rank¹. Her peaceful employments were however sadly disturbed by the insidious movements of the Emperor Frederic. This monarch was busily engaged in trying, by bribes or threats, to induce the governors of the principal Saxon towns to receive him as their lord, in case anything should occur to prevent the safe return of the duke—a proviso fraught with much sinister meaning². Matilda heard with jealous alarm of these proceedings, and sent off an immediate express to warn her lord. Fedel de Walmoden is the person whom tradition reports to have been employed as her messenger³. This circumstance increased the anxiety with which the young duchess looked forward to Henry's return, which had already been protracted month after month considerably beyond the period at first anticipated; but several unforeseen circumstances had occurred to impede his progress. In the very commencement of his pilgrimage, before he had reached the confines of Europe, he was detained some time in Hungary by the commotions occasioned by the death of the king and the election of another sovereign. He proceeded next to Constantinople, where he was received with great splendour by the Greek Emperor Manuel, with whom, and also with the empress, he exchanged many costly gifts. The presents made by

¹ Chron. Slav., p. 630.

² Gobelinus Persona Meibom, vol. i., p. 271.

³ Grüber, cap. xx.

Henry the Lion were war-steeds gorgeously caparisoned, coats of mail, and swords of the most approved temper; whilst those which he received from the sovereigns of the luxurious East were uniforms to clothe his soldiers, rich and beautiful furs, and a robe of ermine which was given to him by the empress, as a mark of special favour¹. Having thus interchanged civilities, the duke and his train set sail, and after a stormy passage, landed at Acres. The fame of his military prowess, wealth, and munificence, had preceded him; and whilst journeying towards Jerusalem, he was met by the Knights Templars and Hospitallers in stately procession, who led him to the holy city. On his approach, the clergy, chanting hymns and songs of joy, came forth to welcome him. His offerings at the holy sepulchre were most magnificent; he decorated the church itself so profusely with gold, that he is said by some of the chroniclers to have covered it with that precious metal², besides bestowing upon it large sums of money. He also gave an endowment for three lamps to be kept perpetually burning before the holy shrine, as an atonement for his sins, for those of "the noble Duchess Matilda, daughter of the most glorious King of England, and also for the welfare of the heirs whom it might please God to send them³."

He was detained some time in the sacred city by the hospitality of Baldwin, the Christian King of Jerusalem, who insisted on having the presence of his illustrious guest at a series of festivals which he gave in his honour⁴. There was a relationship, though distant, between Henry's wife, Matilda, and Baldwin, King of Jerusalem, both being descended from Foulk of Anjou, who it will be remembered became King of Jerusalem in 1131. Baldwin was

¹ Chron. Slav., p. 633.

² Ibid., p. 634.

³ The charter may be seen among the Probationes Hist. Guelf. in Scheidius, vol. iii., No. LXVI.

⁴ Chron. Slav., p. 635.

the grandchild and Matilda the great-grandchild of the Anjevin earl¹. Henry visited with pilgrim reverence the places celebrated in Holy Writ,—the mount of Olivet, the valley of Jehoshaphat, the village of Bethlehem, the city of Nazareth, and the stream of Jordan, and returned again to Jerusalem. After a short stay with the patriarch of the holy city, he set forth on his homeward course, having liberally rewarded the templars and hospitallers with gifts of arms and money for their attentions². He very narrowly escaped the snares of a Saracen emir, who had formed a plot to entrap him and take him prisoner, but at length he arrived in safety at Eraclea, in Romania, and thence proceeded to Axarat, where he was met and greeted in the most cordial manner by the Turkish Sultan of Iconium, Kilidge Arslan II., who claimed relationship with him, one of his ancestors having married a Saxon princess³.

The gifts conferred on Duke Henry by this sovereign certainly realize all our ideas of oriental magnificence, glowing as they are with the impressions received in childhood from the perusal of the wondrous tales of the Arabian Nights. After presenting him with a gorgeous caftan of the most costly manufacture and workmanship, eighteen hundred war-steeds were brought in, and each of the attendants of Henry was ordered to select that one for his own use which best suited his fancy; after which thirty beautiful chargers, whose bits were of silver, their saddles of ivory, and their trappings of velvet, inwrought with gold and gems, were given to the duke; as also two leopards and an immense lion, animals then almost unknown in Europe, with many slaves, all provided with horses for their own riding, and six camels, loaded with gifts of every description⁴.

A long discussion afterwards took place between Henry

¹ Grüber, *Essai Hist.*, Royal MS. press mark, 103, C. 8, cap. x.

² *Compil. Chronol.*, ut supra.

³ *Chron. Slav.*, p. 635.

⁴ *Compil. Chron.*, ap Leibnitz, vol. ii., p. 66.

and his host on the doctrines of the Christian faith, which, though curious enough, we have not space to insert. The victory in this war of words is of course said to have devolved on the duke¹. They parted in more perfect good temper than is generally maintained by theological disputants, and Duke Henry returned by land to Constantinople. Here the emperor heartily welcomed him, and, after having in vain tried to detain him as his guest, presented him with fourteen mules laden with gold and silver and precious stones, and also with a great number of those magnificent silken robes for which the Bosphorus was even then so celebrated². But Henry, in a tone of lofty politeness, declared that with these things he was already sufficiently provided, and absolutely refused to accept them. The generous emperor, determined that he should not go without some token of his regard, substituted other gifts which he was less unwilling to receive. These were several precious manuscripts of the Holy Gospels, and also a number of relics of saints and martyrs, ample stores of which were deposited in the different churches of Constantinople, and from which Henry was permitted to make his selection³. He certainly did not display so much modesty here as he had done on the former occasion; and, but for the peculiar facility which the bones of the worthy saints possessed of multiplying themselves almost as fast as there was a demand for them, we should be disposed to think he had committed very serious depredations on the Greek churches.

Taking leave of the emperor, he made his way as quickly as might be to Hungary: he was escorted through that kingdom by the newly-elected sovereign, and after a short visit to the German emperor, who congratulated him with hypocritical warmth on his safe return, he hastened to make

¹ Chron. Slav., p. 635.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., p. 637.

his *entrée* into his own capital of Brunswick¹. His train of attendants, clad in the rich liveries presented by the Greek empress, and mounted on the horses of the sultan of the Turks, the long procession of slaves who followed them, the magnificent led horses and their gorgeous accoutrements, the grim forms of the caged wild beasts, the camels with their heavy burdens, and the sumpter-mules with their dusky drivers, bearing such a mass of wealth, must have presented altogether an aspect of truly oriental magnificence. The duke was enthusiastically welcomed by all classes of his subjects, and in the midst of general acclamations, entered once again the ducal palace, where his beautiful wife, with her smiling infant, was waiting, in all the graceful pride of a young mother, to receive him.

Shortly after his return, their infant daughter received at the font the German name of Richenza, which was that of Duke Henry's maternal grandmother, the Empress Richenza, wife of Lothaire II². The baptismal ceremony probably took place during a visit paid by the Emperor Frederic and his consort to Brunswick, soon after Henry's return from the Holy Land. They were honourably entertained by the duke and duchess; and the mild and dignified manners of the latter produced a very favourable impression upon the mind of Frederic. On his departure he made her many valuable presents, which, he courteously said, were far below her merits, and during his after negotiations with her husband, she was always treated by him with marked respect.

One of the first cares of the duke, after his return, was the consecration of the cathedral of Brunswick, which he determined to dedicate to St. Blasius, whose relics, inclosed in a shrine of silver gilt, he had brought with him from Greece. The preparation of proper shrines for all the

¹ Chron. Slav., p. 637.

² Orig. Guelf., vol. iii., p. 171.

precious rags and bones, and bits of wood, &c., to the number of 143, which had been presented to him, and for which he felt the reverence of a true Catholic, occupied for some time the attention, and exercised the ingenuity of himself and the duchess, as well as that of the skilful artisans whom they collected around them. There was a tooth of St. John the Baptist, a great toe of St. Mark's, (falsifying, as we are exultingly informed, the proud boast of the Venetians that they possessed the whole body of that saint,) the arms of St. Innocent and St. Theodore, a scrap of the dresses of the Virgin Mary, of St. Stephen the proto-martyr, St. Lawrence and Mary Magdalene, some of the wood of the cross, a few splinters from the crown of thorns, a piece of the column to which our Lord was bound to be scourged, a part of the table used at his last supper, and various other articles too numerous to mention, each of which was deposited in a separate shrine of gold or silver, decorated with gems¹; and judging from the engravings of them in the manuscript of the Royal Library before alluded to, these shrines were elegantly and tastefully executed¹. The wood of the cross in particular was enshrined in a large silver crucifix, decorated with fifty-one pearls, thirty-nine corals, and ninety-six other jewels². Thus encased, Henry distributed the treasures among the different churches in Brunswick, but by far the greatest number fell to the share of St. Blasius³. Many of his eastern spoils were placed at the disposal of Matilda, who was not behind-hand in her monastic donations, if we may judge by those she presented to the monastery of Hildesheim, of which a catalogue is preserved. The principal of these were a magnificent Grecian censer, an altar-cloth inwoven with gold, and another still more valuable,

¹ Excerpt. Chron. Duc. Brunsw., Leibnitz, vol. ii., p. 59.

² Lipsauographia. 4to. Hanover, 1724.

³ Chron. Slav., p. 637. Many of them were, in 1671, transferred to Hanover, where the jewelled shrines are still preserved, although the relics themselves having lost their ideal value, have been thrown away.

which was embroidered with figures worked in with gold threads, two jewelled caskets, sandals for the use of the bishop, with a variety of priestly garments, white, purple, and crimson, many of them ornamented with gold and gems¹. It is very probable that the duchess, according to the custom of the pious ladies of her day, spent many of her leisure hours in embroidering the monkish garments, to which so much importance appears to have been attached.

About this time Henry was engaged in the formation of the celebrated hunting-park, called Der Hagen, adjoining the ducal mansion, which was considered one of the marvels of the day. It was diversified by hill and dale, stately trees, and meandering streams, pleasant gardens, wide meadow-lands, and extensive thickets, while summer-houses, temples, and moss-houses, were placed in picturesque situations to adorn the whole². From the wonder it excited, we may infer that the luxury of parks was unknown at that time in Germany. Probably Matilda's reminiscences of her childish days, spent among the romantic grounds of Woodstock, induced this attempt on the part of her lord to procure for her a substitute; and the description of these pleasure-grounds certainly lead us to suppose that he succeeded admirably well. He was busied, also, in the erection of the churches of St. Jurtha, St. Gertrude, and St. Gregory, and in making many other improvements in the metropolis³. The city of Lubeck, too, which under his auspices had sprung up from a mere hamlet to a flourishing town, was erected by him into a bishopric; and on the 24th of June, 1174, he installed the new bishop in person, amidst large assemblies of the clergy and populace, and, at the same time, laid the foundation of

¹ Excerpta ex libro donat. Eccles. Hildes. Leibnitz., vol. i., p. 770.

² Botho's Chron. Pictur., p. 348.

³ Chron. Rythm. Brunsw., p. 54. Apograph. Tab. Vern. in Basil. St. Blas. Leibnitz., vol. iii., p. 48. Chron. Pict. Brunsw., p. 348.

the cathedral, which he endowed with a considerable annual revenue¹.

The necessary care of his wide-spread dominions occasioned the duke to take frequent journeys, but it does not appear that Matilda accompanied him. The charge of the infant family which was now springing up around her detained her at Brunswick, while her husband was involved in the turmoils and anxieties of political life. In the year 1175 he joined the emperor, with 1200 coats of mail, in one of his expeditions against Milan, in Italy². They soon compelled the rebellious Milanese to sue for a truce, which was granted, and Henry, in spite of the strongly-expressed wishes of the emperor that he would remain to the end of the campaign, took his departure from the army, although the office of sword-bearer to the emperor, which devolved upon him as Duke of Saxony, together with the feudal duty of a vassal to attend his lord at pleasure in his wars, rendered the claims of Frederic strong upon him³. The cause of this cool co-operation has been ascribed to successful bribery on the part of the emperor's political enemies⁴; but this supposition is so contrary to the general nobleness of Henry's character, that it seems far more probable that it was the reluctance felt by the duke to fight in the lists of an adherent of the antipope Calixtus, to whose cause the emperor was devoted, that influenced him,—his inclinations, influenced by his English consort, now strongly preponderating in favour of Pope Alexander III.; and this is the more frequently assigned motive for his abrupt departure for Italy⁵.

No sooner had the proud banners of Henry the Lion disappeared across the Alps than the Milanese, disregard-

¹ Lubeckische Chronick, 8vo., Lubeck, 1842, p. 56.

² Geneal. Duc. Brunsw., Leibnitz, vol. ii., p. 19.

³ Chron. Rythm. Brunsw., p. 55. Arenp. Frising., p. 673.

⁴ Hechtius de Insignibus Henrici Leonis, p. 210.

⁵ Arenp. Fris., ut sup. Vit. Arenpeck de Guelfis, Leibnitz, vol. iii., p. 673. Frag. Hanov. Chron. 4to. 1696, p. 4.

ing the truce, again broke out into open revolt. In one of their sallies, by an untoward accident, the person of the empress herself fell into their hands, and to show their contemptuous dislike, they placed her on an ass, with her face to the tail, and having paraded her through the city, sent her back in that condition to the camp. In spite of all the efforts of the indignant nobles who flocked around her, she refused to dismount until the emperor came himself to be a personal witness of the affront that had been offered her. But though he endeavoured to make a jest of the affair, and to console her, he did not the less keenly resent the proffered indignity¹. Deserted by the flower of his troops, however, he was placed in such perilous circumstances, that he sent off messengers to summon all the German princes, but especially the Lion of Saxony, to meet him at Chiavenna, on the Lake of Como². That the emperor entertained a most exalted opinion of the courage and military abilities of his powerful vassal is very evident, and it seems to have been founded on the former experience he himself had had of his prowess. At the time of the coronation of Frederic, the discords between the factions of the Guelphs and Ghibellines ran so high that, even after the pontiff had placed the imperial diadem on his brows, a sudden and unexpected attack was made upon him by the furious Roman mob, when attended by only a slight guard. Fortunately for him Henry the Lion was one of that guard, and by the most heroic exertions of personal valour, secured for him a safe retreat through the gate of St. Angelo³. The emperor is reported to have himself loosed the helmet and staunched the wounds of his brave deliverer who had suffered severely in his defence, and he ever afterwards retained the most vivid impressions

¹ Fellerus, *Monumenta Varia Inedita*, p. 168. From an unpublished portion of Herman Korner's Chronicle.

² Otto St. Blasius, *Urstisius*, p. 209.

³ *Chron. Engelhusii*, Leibnitz, vol. ii., p. 1103. Botho's *Chron. Brunsw. Pict.*, p. 345.

of his valour¹. He was therefore extremely anxious to secure his services in the present emergency, and on their meeting at Chiavenna a singular scene took place, almost unparalleled in the annals of history. Frederic condescended to the most earnest and passionate entreaties that the duke would accompany him back to Italy. He pleaded his oaths of fealty, his consanguinity, the bonds of alliance between them, and, more than all, his hopelessness of success without Henry's personal assistance, offering at the same time to grant him whatever he might ask as the reward of compliance; but to all these arguments the duke opposed a firm but respectful refusal, excusing himself on account of his increasing age, and the fatigues he had already undergone in his previous expeditions to Italy with the emperor; at the same time he offered to contribute largely to the expenses of the war². Carried away by his intense desire of winning the important point, the emperor, after having in vain exhausted all his eloquence, rose from his chair of state, and in a transport of passionate emotion, threw himself at the feet of his vassal, declaring he would not rise till his request was granted. "Let him lie," whispered Jordan, a servant of the lion duke, who was standing behind him, "what reck's it if the imperial crown is now at thy feet, which shall some time glitter on thy brow³?" But the empress, who was present, hastened to interpose her remonstrances. "Stand up, my dear lord; why do you thus demean yourself? Remember your own dignity and your royal race, and remember too that God will watch over you, and judge between you and this proud man⁴." Henry, "vehemently disturbed," we are told, "to see the lord of the world lie at his feet," entreated him to

¹ Chron. Rythm. Bruns. ut sup.

² Chron. Slav., p. 640.

³ Arenp. Frising., p. 673. Syntag. de Eccles. Gondersh., Meibom., vol. ii., p. 505.

⁴ Chron. Luneburgh, p. 174. Chron. Slav., Meibom., vol. i., p. 505.

rise; but not one word of concession was extorted from him¹. Nothing is more galling to a haughty spirit than the recollection of self-degradation, but much more so when that degradation has been undergone in vain; and in the bitter moments when Frederic had to confine within his swelling bosom the torrent of his all but irrepressible indignation, he conceived for the proud noble who had been the cause of his fruitless humiliation that deadly hatred of which he afterwards gave such fearful proofs. As yet, however, policy compelled him to maintain an appearance of calmness, and the duke was allowed to depart in peace. But a storm was brooding over him, ready to explode as soon as opportunity should offer.

Meanwhile Duke Henry returned to his own family, which now boasted the addition of a son and heir, who was christened Henry, after his father and grandfather, and with his amiable consort he spent nearly two years in comparative peace, busied in the prosecution of those schemes for public improvement and the adornment of his capital, to which he had previously paid so much attention, while the erection of the church of Lubec and several others in different parts of his dominions testified his liberality in the cause of religion².

No sooner had the Emperor Frederic returned from his Italian expedition, in which, contrary to his expectations, he had proved successful, and had amply revenged upon the Milanese the dishonour inflicted upon the empress³, than he assembled the princes of the empire, and poured forth the most bitter complaints of the insolence and indignity with which he had been treated by Henry the Lion. His accusations were made before those who were most willing to respond to them. The duke, in the midst of his prosperity, does not seem to have possessed the happy art of conciliating friends;

¹ Chron. Slav., p. 640. Otto St. Blasius, p. 209.

² Chron. Slav., p. 640.

³ Fell. Mon. Varia Ined., p. 169.

whether he had lorded it over the inferior nobles with too high a hand, or whether their jealousy of his power were the sole ground of their enmity¹, certain it is, that no sooner were the sentiments of the emperor concerning his vassal known, than swarms of the lesser nobles, and, indeed, many of the chief princes of the empire, were ready to start up against him, and add their accusations to those already brought forward². "War, war, I perceive is prepared against me," was the exclamation of the duke, when tidings were brought him of this combination, rendered more formidable by the emperor's having recently entered into an accommodation with the Holy See, in order to be more at leisure to follow out his vindictive designs³; and he instantly prepared for a vigorous defence. Frederic and his adherents were soon to prove that lion-hunting is neither a safe nor a pleasant amusement. Many times during the long series of contests that ensued, did the brave duke throw himself upon one or other of his assailants, and, by a rapid and brilliant charge, carry off a decisive victory, and return home laden with spoils, and with a long train of captives in his rear, to Brunswick⁴. In the early part of these struggles, the emperor declined coming prominently forward, and even maintained a sort of feigned neutrality, whilst the powerful Archbishop of Cologne (between whom and Duke Henry a strife had long subsisted, on account of some revenues claimed by the former and refused by the latter,) and other lords, ecclesiastical as well as civil, were avenging his quarrels⁵. At first, indeed, Henry

¹ The author of the *Annals of Brandenburg* takes this latter view of the subject. Kleye, *Script. Rer. Brandenb.*, vol. i., p. 278.

² *Chron. Slav.*, p. 640.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Chron. Schwartzburgh, Schoettgenius, Diplom. et Script. Germ. Medii Ævi*, vol. i., p. 156.

⁵ *Chron. Slav.*, p. 641. *Annales Bossovienses*, Echard, *Script. Medii Ævi*, vol. i., cols. 1018-9 et seq. Gerard Stederburg, *Hist. de Henr. Leo.*, Meibom., vol. i., p. 430.

appealed to Frederic himself against these incursions¹, and court after court was summoned; but the duke was made to appear as defendant against his numerous accusers rather than as plaintiff. At length a private interview took place between him and the emperor near Hasleben, where Frederic demanded from him the enormous sum of 5000 marks, as the only price at which he would consent to attempt a pacification between him and the princes. This the duke indignantly refused. He now plainly perceived that negotiations would be worse than fruitless, and that to his own good sword he must trust for the vindication of his rights. When again summoned before the Imperial Court, he declined to appear without a safe conduct for his return, which the emperor would not consent to grant; and the result was, that, by the common voice of the diet, he was condemned as guilty of *lèse majesté*. The palatine dignity which he had previously enjoyed was transferred to Louis III., Landgrave of Thuringia²; his estates were forfeited, and distributed among the hungry nobles, and he himself laid under the ban of the empire³. Nor was this all. Ulric, the warlike Bishop of Halberstadt, long one of his most determined opponents, excommunicated him, and laid his dominions under an interdict, forbidding any religious service whatever to take place, except in the monasteries, and then only with closed doors. This formidable decree affected the duke far more than any which had preceded it: it produced a general panic throughout his dominions; and such was the consternation excited in the mind of the pious Duchess Matilda, that she forthwith induced her lord to go to Halberstadt, and herself accompanied him thither, to endeavour to obtain a repeal of the decree. At her persuasion Henry made the necessary concessions to the

¹ Chron. Slav., p. 644.

² Fabricius, *Origines Saxoniae*, p. 89.

³ Chron. Slav., p. 644. Bened. Petrob., *Vita Henry II.*, Hearne's edit., vol. i., pp. 329—30. Chron. Schwartzburgh, ut supra.

haughty prelate, and the fearful sentence was revoked¹. But the interval of peace was only short. Ulric was soon up in arms again, and the duke sent a body of troops to attack him in his own episcopal city, who were only too successful, for they stormed and fired the town; and the cathedral, to which eight hundred of the clergy and people had retired for the sake of safety, was burnt, along with all its wretched inmates. The bishop, with his immediate attendants, bearing the relics of St. Stephen, which they had vainly hoped would have proved their safeguard², were with difficulty rescued from the flames in which the episcopal palace was already enveloped³.

Great were the rejoicings in the palace of Duke Henry on the arrival of the news of this important victory; but when the grey-haired bishop, now in extreme old age, was led before him, bearing the blackened relics of St. Stephen, and when he heard of the horrible fate of the clergy of Halberstadt, he is reported to have shed tears of indignation and sorrow, vehemently declaring that such cruelties were never perpetrated by his directions, or with his consent. Matilda, with zealous eagerness, prepared for the captive prelate an ample supply of priestly garments, probably wrought by her own industry, and ministered in the most liberal manner to his necessities during the period of his imprisonment⁴. Another gleam of triumph gilded the arms of the duke this year, 1181, for in an attack upon Thuringia, he took prisoner Louis, the landgrave of the

¹ Chron. Slav., p. 645.

² Ibid., p. 646. Addit. ad Lambert Schafnaburgh, Pistorius, vol. i., p. 429. Annal. Bossov., Echard, vol. i., col. 1019.

³ The destruction of this city is bewailed in the most pathetic manner in the jingling rhymes of a monk of Halberstadt, of which the following is a specimen:—

“Quis furor ignis? Quæve malignis causa furoris?

Carmine pingo, non ego fingo, verba doloris;

Urbs sacra, dives, plebs bona, cives, est data præda;

Fit pavor urbis, fit fuga turbis, fit fuga fœda,” &c.—

Chron. Halberst., Leibnitz, vol. ii., p. 137.

⁴ Gaspar Abel, Chronick von Halberstadt, 4to., 1754, p. 241.

province, and his brother Herman, with a vast number of soldiers, and once more victoriously returned to Brunswick, where he was received with general acclamations, "and in all his house there was great joy and exultation¹."

The constancy with which, amidst all his fluctuations of fortune, the duke ever returned, when a short breathing-time was allowed him, to share his joys or sorrows with his wife, proves that in Matilda he found the ready and sympathising solacer of his troubles, and the companion of his pleasures; while the facility with which she entered into his plans, and accommodated herself to his views, reflects the greatest credit upon her prudence and good sense, especially when we recollect that she was still young, having only completed her twenty-fifth year. She possessed considerable influence over the mind of her lord, particularly in ecclesiastical affairs. The distribution of vacant benefices was frequently left under her control, and such was the reverence in which she was held for piety as well as discernment, that she had generally but to signify her wish, and the object of her choice was sure to be elected².

In the course of the last few years the duchess had given birth to another daughter, named after herself, and to a son, afterwards the celebrated Emperor Otho IV., and she devoted herself to the care and education of her young family with the most unremitting assiduity.

Misfortunes were now fast thickening around the ducal house of Saxony. The emperor at length took the field in person. He at once besieged the city of Lubeck³, to which Duke Henry had retired, and which he had strongly forti-

¹ Chron. Slav., p. 647. Chron. Stederb., p. 860.

² Chron. Brunsw., Pict., p. 345.

³ Lubeckische Chronik, p. 58. One of the ancient chroniclers says that Henry was taken at Lubeck, and compelled by the emperor to carry a dog on his shoulders for a thousand paces, whence he was called Cunophorus. Ludewig, Rer. Germ. Script. Ant., vol. iii., p. 549. But that is probably a fable; for had he been once in the emperor's power, it is not likely he would readily have recovered his liberty.

fied¹; but the emperor's arms proved victorious, and Henry, deserted by all but a few attendants, was forced to fly before him, and wandered through heath and forest, where the difficult nature of the region alone secured him from falling into the hands of the imperial troops².

Place after place was forced to yield, and at last Brunswick itself was attacked. At this period Henry was absent from his capital, but Matilda was unable to leave it, having just given birth to her son Lothaire, and was exposed, unprotected, to all the horrors of a siege. The city was ill-stored with provisions, and the small supplies were soon so far exhausted that the duchess herself was left without the ordinary comforts that were requisite in her situation, and was compelled to appeal to the generosity of the emperor for a supply of wine for her personal wants. He immediately sent her a tun, with a courteous message, intimating that in deference to her he should forthwith raise the siege³. The truth was, however, that the capital of Henry of Saxony was far too strongly fortified, by the recent improvements he had made, to yield readily, even though ill-stored and defended, to the imperial arms, and Frederic made a voluntary retreat, in order to avoid the disgrace of a compulsory one⁴. He gave Matilda a more sincere proof of regard very soon after, by preventing any attack being made on the city of Luneburgh, to which she had retired, and which she pleaded belonged peculiarly to herself, as being part of her dower⁵.

Duke Henry had appealed to his father-in-law in his distress; but although the English king sympathized sincerely in his misfortunes, he was unprepared for rendering him that assistance, which, to be effectual, must be

¹ Chron. Slav., p. 649.

² Chron. Erfurt, Menckenius, *Rer. Germ. Script. Ant.*, vol. iii. col. 227.

³ Chron. Landuc., Bouquet, vol. xviii., p. 703.

⁴ Otto St. Blasius, p. 210.

⁵ *Annales Bassev.*, Echard, vol. i., col. 1022. Chron. Bardevic. Leibnitz, vol. iii., p. 217. Chron. Stadtweg., *Ibid.*, p. 271.

speedy¹; and the remonstrances which he sent, accompanied by splendid presents, to induce the emperor to desist from these harassing attacks, proved unavailing². The treachery of many even of his former adherents, who owed their elevation to the Duke of Saxony, proved the omen of his downfall; and at the Christmas of 1181, which was celebrated at Luneburgh, one of these, named Bertrand de Raceburgh, was accused, it would seem with good foundation, of a design to poison the duke and duchess at an entertainment, to which he had invited them.

The desertion of almost all his followers reduced the unfortunate duke to such an extremity, that he was forced to abandon all hope of success in arms; and repairing to Erfurth, where the Imperial Court was then held, he threw himself at the feet of Frederic, submitting entirely to his mercy³. With hypocritical expressions of pity, the sovereign raised and kissed his suppliant vassal, and is said to have wept with compassion at the sight of his misery; but his after-conduct would rather lead us to conclude, that his tears were those of delight at gratified revenge, at seeing his haughty subject thus brought into the same position which he himself had formerly assumed; for the sentence pronounced against the duke was extremely rigorous. He was banished altogether from Germany, for seven years, during which period he might not revisit his country without the emperor's special permission, and of all his wide-spread domains only his patrimonial estates were left to him. These consisted of Brunswick and Luneburgh, with Hanover, Zell, and Wolfenbuttel, and a few less considerable places; no despicable inheritance truly, and yet but insignificant as compared with his former possessions. All the remainder was declared forfeit, and distributed by the emperor among his own favourites,

¹ Bened. Petrob., vol. i., p. 330.

² Hoveden, p. 351 b. *Scriptores Post Bedam*, edit. 1596.

³ Chron. Slav., p. 652.

who had been the principal agents in the passing of this iniquitous sentence¹. To these hard conditions Henry was compelled to swear assent, but the intercession of the Kings of England and France and the Earl of Flanders were interposed so pressingly in his behalf that, in deference to them, Frederic consented to remit four years of his exile; so that after a three years' absence he was to be allowed to return to his wofully-diminished inheritance². The emperor sent a special message to the duchess, to say that if she chose to remain in Germany, she would be taken under his protection, and enjoy all her dower lands free and undisturbed; but that if she preferred to follow the fortunes of her exiled lord, he would appoint stewards over her estates, and take care that her revenues were secured to her³. Matilda's resolution was at once taken; she determined to fulfil her conjugal duties by accompanying her husband,—a resolution not fraught certainly with any great amount of sacrifice, since she was secure of an asylum in her father's court.

The situation of the once powerful Duke of Saxony, stripped of his extensive possessions, reduced to comparative beggary, and banished as a disgraced exile, raised so much sympathy, that many of those nobles who had not joined in the recent decrees against him flocked to show him respect, by accompanying him to any place where he might choose to retire. This they did the more willingly since the emperor, whose wrath appears to have been pacified by the complete humiliation of his proud vassal, gave permission to any that wished to escort him to return home whenever they pleased⁴.

With heavy hearts the duke and duchess, in the latter part of the year 1182, prepared for their departure from

¹ Chron. Slav., Leibnitz, vol. ii., p. 652. Chron. Elway., Freher, vol. i., p. 677.

² Bened. Petrob., vol. i., pp. 376-7. Hoveden, p. 339 b.

³ Hoveden, p. 351 b.

⁴ Bened. Petrob., vol. i., p. 377. Chr. on. Mailros, Gale, vol. i., p. 175.

their own proud halls, to throw themselves as pensioners upon the hospitality of others. All their children went with them, excepting the infant Lothaire, who, on account of his tender age, was obliged to be left behind in charge of his nurses¹; and attended on their journey by a gallant train of nobles, they made their way to Argenton, where Matilda remained for several months an inhabitant of that palace which sixteen years before had re-echoed with the rejoicings of her bridal².

A friendly intercourse had been kept up during the period in which Matilda had been separated from her parents. In 1175 the Pipe Roll records the payment of 4*s.* 8*d.* to the messengers of the Duchess of Saxony³. In 1179 the king sent the duke a present of six coats of mail⁴, a compliment which Henry returned by sending to his father-in-law in the following year a falconer with twenty falcons⁵. Several entries also occur of presents of clothes made by the king to the duchess, and also to her servants, as well as of horses and naval equipments⁶.

King Henry, who was on a warlike expedition in Poictou, returned on hearing of the arrival of the exiles, and received them in the most honourable manner. The presence of the daughter from whom he had been so long parted, and the sight of her children, the eldest of whom, Richenza, was now in her twelfth year, were sources of great gratification to the monarch, harassed as he was by the perpetual and vexatious rebellions of his sons⁷. He made handsome presents to the nobles who had escorted the ducal family to Normandy, and who, after remaining a few days at court, sharing the hospitality

¹ Diceto, Twysden, p. 614.

² Hoveden, p. 352.

³ Pipe Roll, 21 Hen. II., Hampshire.

⁴ Ibid., 25 Hen. II., Oxfordshire.

⁵ Ibid., 26 Hen. II., Southamptonshire.

⁶ Ibid., 26 Hen. II., Southampton; 27 Hen. II., London and Middlesex; 29 Hen. II., passim.

⁷ Bened. Petrob., ut supra, Paris, vol. i., p. 140.

of the sovereign, sought and obtained permission to return to Germany¹. To his son-in-law he gave the liberal allowance of fifty Anjevin livres a-day for the expenses of his family, though they maintained no separate establishment, residing in the palace, and being entertained entirely at the charge of the king, who treated them in the most hospitable manner².

The Christmas festival was celebrated at Caen, where Prince Henry and his brothers, Richard and Geoffry, came to pay their respects to a sister, of whom, on account of their early separation, they could have had but a very faint recollection³. Prince John was then in England. Her sisters, whom she had left when they were infants, were long ago married to distant lands, while the queen-mother was in captivity in England; so that Matilda was the only royal lady who graced her father's court on this occasion.

Shortly afterwards Duke Henry asked and obtained the consent of his royal father-in-law to perform a vow which he had made before leaving Brunswick of going on a pilgrimage to the far-famed shrine of St. James of Compostella⁴. So popular had this saint become, that a regular series of post-houses had been built on the road to Compostella, for the accommodation of the numerous tribes of pilgrims who flocked to pay their homage at his shrine⁵. Accordingly, leaving his wife, who was then *enceinte*, in charge of her father, the duke took his departure for Spain.

It must have been during this visit to Normandy that Matilda was seen and admired by Bertrand de Borne, the celebrated troubadour bard, who was a favourite and com-

¹ Bened. Petrob., ut supra.

² Chron. Slav., p. 653.

³ Bened. Petrob., vol. ii., p. 382, Append. to Rob. de Monte, Bouquet, vol. xviii., p. 334. Hoveden, p. 352 b.

⁴ Bened. Petrob., vol. i., p. 377. Hoveden, p. 352.

⁵ Anselme, Palais de l'Honneur, p. 148.

panion-in-arms of her brother Richard. To gratify that prince Matilda received his poet-friend with all possible courtesy, and took much pleasure in his conversation, well knowing that such was his reputation for valour as well as learning, that it was no condescension even in a princess to associate with him on equal terms. Her favours were returned by a burst of enthusiastic passion on the part of the young troubadour, who celebrates in the most ardent language her voice, her smile, her delicate shape, her fresh and beautiful complexion, &c., and declares that he dreams of her night and day, and must expire of love, if not relieved by a kiss from her lovely lips¹.

In the autumn of the same year, 1183, the king went over to England, and invited his daughter to accompany him, but she preferred to remain in Normandy till the return of her spouse, which was so long delayed, that they were unable to sail until the following spring. The vessels which had conveyed King Henry were sent back for the duke and duchess to Witsand, from whence they accordingly set sail, and after a passage so stormy that several ships of their small fleet were wrecked, they landed on the 1st of May, 1184, at Dover². They commenced their journey without delay, and pausing at Canterbury to pay their devotions at the shrine of the martyred Thomas-à-Becket, proceeded to Winchester, where the court was then residing³.

The strong affection which subsisted between the queen

¹ Raymond, *Poesies des Troubadours*, vol. v., p. 81, vol. iii., pp. 135, 137. Some confusion exists as to what royal lady was eulogized in the passionate serenades of Bertrand, since the object of them is named *Elena*; but it is evident that this name must be a feigned one, and that Matilda was the real object of his homage, because he distinctly alludes to her as being married to Saxony, and as the mother of Otho, afterwards emperor. These allusions quite contradict the generally-received opinion that the "*Elena*" addressed was either Eleanora of Aquitaine, Matilda's mother, or her sister of the same name, who was Queen of Castile. See Millot, *Hist. des Troubadours*, vol. i., p. 222.

² Bened. Petrob., vol. ii., p. 406. Gervase, Twysden, p. 1466.

³ Gervase, p. 1467.

and her eldest daughter has already been alluded to. It was doubtless at Matilda's request that King Henry permitted the long-imprisoned Eleanor once again to join the royal circle¹, from which she had been so long excluded. The recent death of Prince Henry², who, in spite of all his rebellions, was passionately regretted by his father, had softened the mind of the monarch towards his guilty but unfortunate queen: for one of the prince's dying requests, conveyed in his last letters, was that she might be treated more leniently³.

Soon after this was born at Winchester, the youngest son of the duchess, who received the name of his mighty ancestor William the Conqueror⁴. This English-born prince was the progenitor of the house of Brunswick, which has given its sovereigns to the land where he, as the son of an outcast exile, first saw the light. A merry-making followed his birth, which cost the king 3*l.* 16*s.* 10*d.* in corn, barley, and honey to make spiced ale alone; after which the ducal family removed to London; their travelling expenses came to 3*l.* 18*s.*, independently of 1*l.* paid for the conveyance of their wardrobe⁵.

The Christmas festivals were observed this year at Windsor, and graced by the presence of Prince Richard and Prince John⁶. It was probably during this period, that the lion-hearted prince took a fancy to his nephew Otho, then a sprightly boy, six or eight years old, who was afterwards a great favourite with him.

Unwonted unanimity at present prevailed in the royal family, and the court of Henry II. afforded the unusual appearance of the king and queen with their children and

¹ Bened. Petrob., ut supra.

² Hoveden, p. 355 b.

³ Chron. Gauf. Prior Vossen., Labbe, Bibl. MSS., vol. ii., p. 339.

⁴ Diceto, Twysden, p. 619. Matt. Westm., book ii., p. 57. Hoveden, p. 355.

⁵ Madox, History of the Exchequer, vol. i., p. 368.

⁶ Bened. Petrob., vol. ii., pp. 431-2.

grandchildren all living together in amity. But although King Henry did all in his power to render the exile of his son-in-law and daughter as comfortable as he could, by showing them every possible attention, and entertaining them with costly feasts and royal munificence¹, it was scarcely to be expected that the Duke of Saxony would be long content to remain a pensioner on the bounty of a foreign prince, even though that prince were his father-in-law; and he was constantly revolving schemes for his return.

The king interested himself warmly in his behalf, and by his contrivance, the Archbishop of Cologne, one of the bitterest enemies of the duke, was induced to come over to England, for the ostensible purpose of visiting the shrine of Thomas-à-Becket, but with a secret design on the part of the king to bring about a reconciliation between him and Duke Henry. The stern prelate, however, remained unmoved: the dukedom of Angria and Westphalia, part of the spoils of the noble Saxon, had fallen to his share, and he was little disposed to give up his hold upon them, so that this well-concerted scheme completely failed². The king next sent a special embassy to the Pope, entreating his influence with the emperor, and this time he was more successful, for Frederic, at the intercession of the pontiff, consented that, on condition the duke would pledge himself to remain contented with his patrimony, and to raise no fresh disturbances by attempting to regain possession of his former inheritance, he should return again to Germany³.

King Henry was at Winchester when his ambassadors returned, and he immediately sent for Queen Eleanora and the Duke and Duchess of Saxony, who were then

¹ Diceto, Twysden, p. 614.

² Gervase, Twysden, p. 1468. Matt. Westm., book ii., p. 57. Hoveden, p. 355 b.

³ Bened. Petrob., vol. ii., p. 432. Arn. Lubec., Chron. Slav., p. 665. Annals Waverley, Gale, vol. ii., p. 162.

residing at Windsor, and communicated to them the joyful tidings, which they received with great satisfaction, and an embassy was sent to present the grateful acknowledgments of the king and duke to the emperor. The ducal family did not however immediately leave England. In the spring of 1185, the king went over to Normandy, and soon afterwards was joined by his daughter and son-in-law, accompanied by Queen Eleanora¹. They travelled by way of Porchester, and sailed from Portsmouth; the expenses of their journey and voyage across were as usual borne by the king, who also paid the liberal sum of 35*l.* 10*s.* for horses for the use of the duchess to take abroad with her². After a short residence in Normandy, the ducal family took a final leave of their royal relatives, from whom they had received such hospitality, and returned by way of Drincourt to Saxony³, still followed by proofs of their father's liberality, in provisions made for their comforts during their journey⁴. They left behind them, however, young Otho, who at the request of his grandfather or his uncle Richard, was to be provided for by them, and his sister Matilda, who remained as a companion to her grandmother Queen Eleanora, to console her for the loss of her favourite daughter⁵.

The mature age of Duke Henry, who had reached his fifty-sixth year, and his many misfortunes, had now so far subdued his high spirit, that he made no attempts to recover his forfeited estates, and devoted himself entirely to the promotion of the peace and welfare of his subjects, and to the erection of religious and other edifices⁶. He paid attention also to literature, especially to history, for

¹ Gervase, Twysden, p. 1475. Hoveden, *ut supra*.

² Madox, Exchequer, vol. i., pp. 362, 169.

³ Bened. Petrob., vol. ii., pp. 432, 445.

⁴ Magni Rotuli Scaccarii Norm., privately printed by H. Petrie, Esq., Keeper of the Tower Records, pp. 7, 11.

⁵ Bened. Petrob., *ut supra*.

⁶ Chron. Slav., p. 665, Paris, vol. i., p. 143.

which he had so great a partiality, that he often spent the whole night in listening to the reading of ancient chronicles¹. Far more happy must have been these last few years of Matilda's wedded life, spent, though with diminished state, in such peaceful occupations, than the stormy ones, which had preceded her exile; and in the increased domestic comfort she now enjoyed, she found more than a compensation for her former splendours.

The city of Brunswick with its palace, its park, and pleasure-grounds, and its magnificent cathedral, still remained their own; and though the proud column of the Löwenstein, towering before his gates, might sometimes bring back to the mind of the duke visions of his past greatness, yet never, till the gentle influence of his less ambitious consort was removed, did he violate the pledge he had given, as the condition of his return. He frequently indeed applied to the emperor for the restoration of the patrimony which had been ceded to him in the agreement, great part of which was still wrongfully withheld; but although fair words and indefinite promises were all he got by his applications, he manifested no inclination to take up arms. But Frederic had little confidence in these pacific dispositions. To him the Lion seemed but to slumber, and he looked forward with trembling to the hour of his awakening. He was now projecting an expedition to the Holy Land, but he dared not leave his own dominions while Henry of Saxony remained in so close vicinity; he therefore summoned the duke to a conference at Goslar, in which he proposed to him either to attend him to the Holy Land, or to submit, along with his eldest son, to an exile of three years. Henry, having no desire for a pilgrimage in such company, chose the latter alternative², and in the Easter of 1189, he and his son Henry took what

¹ Maderus, *Antiquities of Brunsw.*, p. 268. Gerard Stederburg, *Meibom.*, vol. i., p. 431.

² *Chron. Slav.*, p. 676. Gerard Stederburg, p. 861.

proved to be a final leave of the duchess, and departed for England¹.

The health of Matilda, which had long been declining, prevented her from accompanying her lord as before, and she remained at Brunswick with her daughter Richenza, and her two youngest sons, Lothaire and William. Under such circumstances, the parting with her husband and son must have been peculiarly painful, for little hope could be entertained by any of them, that they should ever meet again. But the will of the emperor was law, and they had no choice but to submit. Matilda survived the departure of the duke only a few weeks, for her death took place on the 28th of June, the same year, 1189², only eight days before that of her father King Henry.

Though Matilda had passed through such varied fortunes, she had only attained her thirty-third year; and her early death is generally attributed to the wearing effects of anxiety and sorrow for the misfortunes of her gallant husband³. She was interred with much pomp in the cathedral church of St. Blasius⁴, of which she had been the co-founder, and was followed to the grave by the sincere regrets of the people, to whom her many virtues had greatly endeared her.

Her statue, carved in stone, was afterwards placed over her tomb by the care of her husband. The figure is tall, and the countenance bears the same regularly beautiful features with which she is portrayed in the picture already alluded to; her brow is encircled by a coronet, unadorned save with a single rose in the centre, which denoted her

¹ Bened. Petroburg., vol. ii., p. 535. Gerard Stederb., Meibom., vol. i., p. 431.

² Gerard Stederburg, p. 431. Chron. Dunstaple, Hearne's edit., vol. i., p. 42.

³ Matthew Paris and one or two other historians say that her death was occasioned by her grief at the loss of her father, but a comparison of dates disproves this statement, as she preceded him to the tomb.

⁴ Chron. Rythm., Leibnitz, vol. iii., p. 66.

descent from the houses of Normandy and Aquitaine¹; the hair is braided down each side of the face, and the long white veil flowing behind is gathered in folds on the bosom. She wears a full under garment confined at the waist, and over all a mantle which nearly envelops her person; her hands are clasped in the meek attitude of prayer, so touchingly expressive, which is almost universally adopted in ancient statues². Several other portraits of Matilda are extant, taken from statues erected to her memory by the fond affection of her sons and grandson; but though the expression of features remains the same, the dress is altered to the more richly ornamented, but far less graceful costume, which distinguishes the portraits of her daughter-in-law, Mary of Brabant, wife of the Emperor Otho³. The one engraved in Botho's pictured chronicles, delineates her and her lord standing on each side the column of the Löwenstein, bearing their respective shields, but the comparatively modern style of the costume renders the authenticity of the likenesses doubtful.

Duke Henry survived his wife six years. Very soon after her death, he, accompanied by his eldest son, who inherited an ample share of his father's spirit, returned to Saxony, regardless of the promise he had given to remain abroad during the emperor's absence⁴, and made some vigorous though unsuccessful attempts to recover his forfeited patrimony⁵, but, during his latter years, all these projects were laid aside, and he lived in peace, paying a careful attention to the exercises of devotion.

¹ Hoveden, in reference to the inauguration of her brother John as Duke of Normandy, says that the archbishop placed on his head the golden circlet having in the summit three golden roses, to signify his dominion over Normandy and Aquitaine; p. 450 b.

² Origines Guelf., vol. iii., tab. xiv.

³ Engraved in Scheidius Origines Guelfica, and in the Epitome Guelfica in the Royal Library.

⁴ Pet. Lambec., Orig. Hamb., Lindenbrogius, Rer. Germ. Script., book i., p. 25.

⁵ Hoveden, p. 376.

The description of the death-bed scene of this once powerful prince, as given us by one of his faithful servants¹, would encourage the hope that the devotional acts of his later days were not the mere result of a conscience struggling to escape the stings of remorse, but of a mind really brought under the influence of religion; for in his last moments he displayed an edifying example of perfect resignation, and simple trust in the mercy of God for forgiveness. He died on the 1st of April, in the year 1195, in the sixty-sixth year of his age, and was interred by the side of Matilda, "that she who had been his faithful consort during life might be his companion in death²." His statue was placed by her's in the cathedral of St. Blasius, with a scabbarded sword in his hand, significant of the pacific dispositions of his later years, and a laudatory epitaph was composed to his memory³.

Of the two daughters of Henry and Matilda⁴, Richenza was married to Waldemar II., King of Denmark; and Matilda was given, by her uncle, King Richard of England, to Geoffry, Earl of Perche, and afterwards to Ingelram de Courcy⁵. Henry, the eldest son, a prince of great abilities and courage, succeeded his father as duke of Brunswick⁶. A romantic tale is told by the contemporary historians with reference to the marriage of this youth. An early attachment had sprung up between him and the beautiful Agnes, daughter of Conrad, Earl Palatine of the Rhine, who was the brother

¹ Gerard Stederburg, Meibom., vol. i., p. 431. Kranzius Saxonia, p. 177.

² Gerard Stederburg, p. 867.

³ Mader, Antiq. Brunsw., p. 270. Botho, Chron. Pict., p. 353.

⁴ Rechtmeier speaks of a natural daughter, Matilda, but Henry's character for conjugal fidelity stands on too firm a basis to be easily impeached. Chron. Bruns. Luneb., vol. i., p. 411.

⁵ Orig. Guelf., vol. iii., pp. 173-4.

⁶ Orig. Guelf., Prob., book iv., p. 356. Bened. Petrob., vol. ii., p. 564.

of the Emperor Frederic I., and consequently uncle to his son and successor Henry VI. An alliance had been projected between them, which the long dissensions of the two houses had completely broken off, but still the image of her young lover clung to the memory of the Lady Agnes. Some years afterwards, her hand was demanded in marriage by Philip of France, who had just divorced his former wife, Ingeburga of Denmark. Her mother announced the proposals to her. "My daughter," said she, "have you any desire for an honourable marriage? It may be accomplished, for the king of France has sent to demand your hand." "Ah, madam," said Agnes, "I have heard from many of this king, how he has scorned and rejected his noble consort, the daughter of the king of Denmark, and after such an example I fear him." "And whom would you prefer to him?" asked the mother, suspecting some love-affair was at the bottom of this opposition; "If I had my own choice, I would never be disunited from young Henry of Saxony, to whom I was plighted in early infancy." "Trust me, my child," rejoined her mother, "you shall yet escape these formidable nuptials, and be united to the man of your choice."

The countess palatine now set to work to concert a scheme for the immediate union of Agnes and her lover: for, as the damsel's father was intent upon the French alliance, no time was to be lost. Agnes, at her mother's request, wrote letters to her lover, informing him of her situation, and these were accompanied by a message from the countess, requesting him to lose not a moment in hurrying to their castle, as Earl Conrad was then absent at the Imperial Court. The expedition was fraught with peril, for young Henry was in great disgrace with the emperor, and could not set foot on the imperial estates without incurring danger, in case he should be recognised. He hesitated not, however, to obey the call of love, and

made such good speed, that, within a few days, he arrived at the castle, long before he was expected, just at the hour of twilight, and presented himself to the astonished Agnes and her mother. No time was lost; the priest was immediately summoned, and that night, without any pomp or preparation, their vows were plighted to each other, and they received the sacerdotal benediction.

Great was the indignation of the Emperor Henry, when he found that the young duke had thus become so nearly allied to the Imperial family, and it was some time before his uncle Conrad could convince him that this bold plot was planned and executed by woman's ingenuity, and without his connivance.

The tale, however, ends happily; Conrad was soon reconciled to the match, and at his intercession, the young couple were received into favour by the emperor, and the discords that had long existed were thus at length brought to a conclusion¹.

The portraits of the Lady Agnes represent her as very beautiful, with keen dark eyes, that betoken a capability of executing any daring scheme on which she had set her heart. She lived many years with her lord, and after her death, he took to wife another lady of the same name, but had no male heirs of his dukedom. Duke Henry lived to a very mature old age, surviving both his brothers, and acting as the guardian of his young nephew Otho, on whom his estates devolved².

Otho, the second son of Henry the Lion and Matilda, was first raised to elevation by his uncle Richard, who gave him the earldom of York, and appointed him regent in Aquitaine and Poictou³. He was afterwards well known as the Emperor Otho IV., but although twice married, he died in 1218, without surviving children.

¹ Gerard Stederburg, p. 866. Hoveden, p. 416.

² Scheidius, vol. iv., p. 10.

³ Hoveden, p. 456 b. Cotton. MS., Claudius, B. vii., ff. 134, col. 1, and 167 b.; col. i.

Lothaire, who is said to have been a graceful and beautiful youth, was given as an hostage for the good conduct of his father, to the Emperor Henry VI., and died shortly after in 1191¹.

William, the English-born prince, on whom the principality of Luneburgh devolved by his father's will, also died young, in the year 1213, leaving, by his wife Helen, sister of Waldemar I., King of Denmark, an only son, Otho, who bore the surname of Puer, or the Child; he succeeded to the possessions of his father and uncles, and is the direct ancestor of the house of Brunswick-Luneburgh².

¹ Gerard Sted., p. 863.

² Reusner Basil., *Stirps Geneal.*, p. 409. Scheidius, vol. iv., pp. 1, 9, 10. *Frag. Gen. Duc. Brunsw.*, Leibnitz, vol. ii., p. 19. For an elaborate account of the princely families descended from Henry the Lion, see Anderson's *Royal Genealogies*, pp. 527, 528.

ELEANORA,

SECOND DAUGHTER OF HEN

Birth—Baptism—Alphonso solicits her hand—Splendid embassy—Journey to Spain—Delight of Alphonso—Betrothal, dowry, nuptials—Palace of Burgos—Visit to Henry II.—Alphonso tries to tax the Nobles—Their resistance—His enlightened policy—Conjugal attachment—Public improvements—Birth and death of Sancho—Birth of Berengaria and other daughters—Eleanora prevents Berengaria's marriage—Birth of Ferdinand and Leonor—Attack upon Moors—Battle of Alcarcos—Alphonso's reported mistress—Erection of the Huelgas—Marriage of Berengaria—Visit of Eleanora of England—Marriage of Blanche—Birth of Henry—Eleanora's visit to King John—Berengaria's return—Death of Ferdinand—Grief of King and Queen—Crusade against the Moors—Concourse at Toledo—Victory of Tolosa—Letters on the occasion—Public thanksgivings—Royal Family set off for Portugal—Sudden death of Alphonso—Grief of Eleanora—Appointed Regent—Her death—Character—That of Alphonso—Family portraits—Children.

ELEANORA, the second daughter of Henry II., though she of course takes her rank among the Princesses of England, was neither English-born nor English-bred, and, excepting during a few years of her early childhood, her life was entirely spent on the Continent. She was born at Damfront in Normandy, in the year 1162. Her baptism, which took place almost immediately after, was

conducted with great ceremony, for no less a person than Henry, the Cardinal Legate, performed the service, giving her the name of her mother, Queen Eleanora, while she was presented at the font by the Bishop of Avranches, and Robert, the learned Abbot of Mount St. Michael, or Robert de Monte, as he is more frequently styled, to whom as an historical authority we have often referred, and from whom we derive this account of the christening of his "dearest mistress and godchild," as he calls the little princess¹.

She seems to have passed her earlier years altogether in England, for she is not mentioned as accompanying her mother and elder sister in their frequent visits to Normandy. Being six years younger than Matilda, she was probably considered of too tender an age to bear the fatigues of travelling; but after the early marriage of the princess-royal in 1168, Eleanora became her mother's more constant companion.

In 1170, the queen, accompanied by her little daughter, held her court at Bourdeaux, when a stately embassy arrived from Alphonso III., King of Castile, to demand the hand of the princess in marriage². This young monarch, although he had worn the crown for twelve years, having succeeded to the throne when quite an infant, on the death of his father Sancho, in 1159³, was now only in his fifteenth year, but, through the devoted gallantry of his Castilian subjects, he had at length over-

¹ Rob. de Monte, Pistorius, vol. i., p. 897.

² Some confusion exists respecting the title of this sovereign. His grandfather, Alphonso the Emperor, was the second of that name in Castile and the eighth in Leon; and his great grandson, Alphonso, who inherited both crowns, was the tenth of Leon, and the fourth of Castile; but the present Alphonso never possessed the crown of Leon, and therefore, correctly speaking, bore no other title than that of *third*, though he is frequently called the *ninth*, and sometimes the *eighth*, of Castile.

³ Alphonsia Carthagenia, Belus, Rer. Hisp. Script. Ant., vol. ii., p. 651.

come the snares and difficulties which the faithlessness of the grandees, and the treachery of his uncle Sancho, King of Navarre, and of the King of Aragon, had laid for him in his infancy, and arrived at the undisturbed possession of his dominions. It was therefore decreed, in a grave deliberation of the Cortes, held at Burgos, that it was high time he should look out for a wife; a discussion next ensued, in which those of the grandees who had daughters to dispose of strongly counselled that the young monarch should choose a bride amongst his own people, each secretly hoping to become father-in-law to the king; the less interested members of the assembly, however, successfully combated such an idea, and it was decided to be more fitting the national dignity and welfare to seek the alliance of a foreign monarch¹, and the young English princess was fixed upon as a suitable mate². An embassy was forthwith despatched to Bourdeaux to the queen-mother, to solicit her hand. The consent of King Henry does not appear to have been even asked by his independent consort; pleased with the idea of having her daughter settled so near her own ancestral province of Aquitaine, and flattered with the splendours of the proposed alliance, she at once accepted the offer, and the ambassadors returned to recount their good success to the king³. A splendid train of prelates and grandees, headed by the Archbishop of Toledo, with the Bishops of Burgos and Segovia, and Don Nuño, Count of Lara, was sent to escort the bride-elect to her future dominions. King Henry, who had in the intermediate time given his full sanction to the arrangement, bestowed upon Eleanora the province of Gascony as her dower, with the consent

¹ *Coronica del Rey Don Alonso Octavio*, par Don Alonso Munez de Castro, pp. 77—80.

² *Roderic Sanctius*, *Hist. Hisp.*, Belus, vol. i., p. 359. *Mariana de Reb. Hisp.*, Schottus, vol. ii., p. 532. We quote from the original Latin of Mariana, not from the Spanish translation now in general use.

³ *Ferrera*, *Hermilly's Edit.*, vol. iii., p. 483.

of his queen¹, who, on her side, neglected nothing that might contribute to her daughter's dignity and comfort. She sent the seneschal of Aquitaine and the Archbishop of Bourdeaux to accompany her, while many nobles from Aquitaine, Bretagne, Normandy, and England, were glad to embrace this opportunity of visiting a land, so associated with all that was chivalrous and romantic; and the Lady Eleanora, thus honourably attended, set forward on her journey to Spain².

It has been asserted that, at the time of her marriage, Eleanora, or, as she is styled by the Spanish historians, Leonor, was the most accomplished princess of her age in Europe. A reference to dates, however, dissipates this illusion, for at this period she was only in her ninth year, and therefore, though she might be, as is asserted, a beautiful brunette in complexion, and gentle and pleasing in manner³, yet she was certainly rather too young to be the model of beauty and learning she is represented, though that she afterwards became such, there is no reason to doubt.

The contentions between the kings of Castile and Navarre prevented the bridal train from taking the direct route through the latter kingdom, but passing through the friendly dominions of the King of Aragon, they arrived at the city of Taragona, where that monarch, with the young King of Castile, was ready to meet them⁴. The two months of July and August, which these monarchs had passed together, waiting the arrival of the bride, were spent in arranging the terms of a treaty between them, which at length seemed to be concluded

¹ Marca, *Histoire des Ducs de Bearn*, book vii., p. 601. Also referred to in book vi., p. 507.

² Mariana, *ut supra*. Zurita, *Annales de Aragon*, p. 76 b.

³ *Chronique de Philippe Mouskes*, vol. ii., p. 250 in *Collection de Chroniques Belges*.

⁴ Ferrera, vol. iii., p. 484. Geronymo Zurita, *Annal. de Aragon*, p. 77.

on a firm footing, and they exchanged castles with each other, as pledges of their mutual fidelity¹.

Alphonso is said to have been much pleased with the appearance and manner of the little Leonor, though his delight must have been rather that of a boy, amused with the novelty of his position, and happy in the society of an agreeable playmate, than that of a grave monarch, gratified to find that his matrimonial speculation had turned out so successfully. Any allusion to the juvenility of the parties is carefully avoided by the grave Spanish chroniclers, as not consorting with the dignity of royalty, and Alphonso and his bride are mentioned with the same profound respect and precisely in the same terms as would have been employed, had they both been twenty years older. The surname of Parvus, or the Child, which is given to the young king by the Norman writers, is never once bestowed upon him by those of Spain. In its place they substitute the cognomina, which he afterwards so worthily won and so well wore, of the Good, or the Noble².

The ceremony of the betrothal of Alphonso and Leonor was celebrated with great splendour at Taragona, in presence of the King of Aragon, the English ambassadors, and the numerous *cortège* of nobles, both Spanish and foreign, who had flocked together. A series of brilliant entertainments was given on the occasion, which lasted nearly the whole month of September, and Alphonso testified his gratification by settling on his bride a dowry far more munificent than had ever before been conferred by Castilian monarch³. It is amusing to read the long list of cities and towns, whose revenues were to be appropriated to the youthful queen; those of Burgos, Najara,

¹ Zurita, *Annales de Aragon*, p. 76 b.

² Mendoça, *Origin de los Dignitades de Castilla y Leon*, p. 47.

³ Geron. Zurita, *Annales de Aragon*, p. 77. *Coronica del Rey Don Alonso*, p. 83.

and Castroxeriz being devoted to her toilet expenses alone! and these places were accordingly consigned into the hands of the English ambassadors, to be kept in her name, while the inhabitants were ordered to pay her the usual feudal homage¹. In addition to these, the gallant boy-bridegroom, whose imagination was glowing with the idea of his anticipated conquests, pledged himself to bestow half of the lands he might conquer from the Moors upon his young companion.

The articles were drawn up in due form, and sworn to by him, in the presence of Ferdinand, King of Aragon, and the ambassadors of England². Not a word is said about tutors and governesses to be provided for the bride, although she must have stood in far more need of them than of the great officers of state who were to form her household.

The young couple next proceeded to Burgos, where the nuptials were solemnized with incredible magnificence, and amidst general rejoicings³. The joy of the people was occasioned not only by the illustrious marriage of their beloved sovereign, but by the restoration of peace, which, after years of harassing conflict with the neighbouring princes, had at length been fully established by the late treaty with the King of Aragon; and so secure did Alphonso now feel himself, that he ventured to dismiss the body-guard of troops, who had hitherto been his constant attendants, and sent them back to their own city of Avila, to which he granted great privileges, as a reward for the long-tried fidelity of its citizen-soldiers⁴.

From Burgos the English ambassadors departed for Aquitaine, the nobles took their leave, and the young monarch and his queen journeyed onwards to their own capital of Toledo. Here they passed much of their time, either in the Tower of St. Romain, or in that of the

¹ Zurita, p. 77.

³ Mariana, p. 533.

² Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

Standard of the Crown, which were the two royal residences in the capital; but their favourite summer abode was the city of Burgos, which, on account of its mountainous situation, was much cooler. Alphonso built a stately palace at some distance from the town, on the brow of a lofty eminence, commanding on one side a view of the city itself, and its pleasant suburbs, with the river of Alançon which washes its walls; while, on the other, the eye ranged over slope after slope of the vine-clad hills of Spain, rising one behind another, until their waving outline was lost in the distant horizon¹. In this pleasant abode, Leonor spent the earlier and many too of the later years of her wedded life.

The pride with which Alphonso regarded his alliance with the monarch who swayed his sceptre over such vast dominions as those of Henry II., led him to seek to establish a more friendly intercourse, by a personal interview with his father-in-law, whom he had not as yet seen. In the February of 1173, King Henry held a court at Montferrand in Auvergne, which was attended by Raymond Earl of Toulouse, Hubert Earl of Moriana, and a crowd of other potent French and Norman nobles; so numerous was the attendance, so magnificent the entertainment, and so costly the apparatus of rich tapestries, and gold and silver plate displayed on the occasion, that we are told no monarch in Europe but the King of England could have borne the expense². To this court Alphonso repaired, accompanied doubtless by his young wife, and remained a considerable time sharing the prodigal hospitality of the royal relative, who had made such extraordinary preparations for his reception³.

That the impression produced upon his mind of the character of the English king was favourable, is manifest

¹ Colmenar, *Delices de l'Espagne*, vol. i., p. 174 et seq.

² Diceto, p. 561, Brompton, p. 1082, Twysden.

³ Diceto and Brompton, *ut supra*.

from his appealing to him, a few years afterwards, to settle the never-ending disputes between himself and the King of Navarre. The latter monarch too, must have had a high opinion of the even-handed justice of King Henry, otherwise he would not have been willing to submit his cause to the father-in-law of his opponent. The whole of the negotiations are preserved in Rymer's *Fœdera*¹, and Henry certainly furnished no mean specimen of his skill and ability, in the impartiality and fairness of his awards.

It was to pay the expenses incurred by this Navarrese war, that Alphonso, who though young, had fully assumed the reins of government, had recourse to an expedient, which, though it proved unsuccessful, reflects the highest honour on his good sense and patriotism. The people of Castile were already over-taxed, and yet the royal exchequer was quite inadequate to meet the demands made upon it. Alphonso, therefore, in association with Don Diego Lopez de Haro, one of the most powerful and liberal-minded nobles of his court, concerted a plan for levying an annual tax of five golden maravedis upon the nobility². Accordingly, on the assembling of the Cortes at Cuença, he represented to them in an eloquent harangue, the necessities of the state, and the burdens already borne by the people, and exhorted them in glowing terms to sacrifice a little of their present privilege of freedom from taxation, in consideration of their country's weal, which would afterwards redound so much to their own advantage. Sentiments so unusual, uttered in such a style of earnest eloquence, struck the ancient grandees of Spain dumb with surprise. They who had been accustomed to consider themselves as placed quite above the common herd, to be actually called upon to share the bur-

¹ Vol. i., pt. i. sub an. 1177. See also Diceto, p. 595, and Gervase, pp. 1120-1, Twysden. Hoveden, pp. 321-3.

² Mendoça, p. 47.

dens of the state with the peasants and burgesses whom they held in such supreme contempt! The thing was not to be thought of for a moment. A general murmur of indignation ran through the assembly, which at length found vent in the vehement remonstrances of Don Nuño, Conde de Lara, who swore that he had rather die for his ancient privileges, than thus tamely yield them up. The whole Cortes joined with him, and the king and his able minister were obliged to retire, sorrowful and dejected, from an assembly which was too narrow-minded and selfish to be able to chime in with their own liberal and enlightened views.

This scene forms the subject of one of those spirited Spanish ballads, or rather romances, which, in that land of poetry and song, were ever made the vehicle of strong and passionate feeling, whether that feeling were love or hate, sympathy or indignation, joy or sorrow; the two concluding lines contain a sentiment, which it is rather singular to find in the lips of nobles of Spain, in the twelfth century,—

“El bien de la libertad,
Per ningun precio es comprado¹.”

“The blessing of freedom is not to be sold at any price.” But, alas! their ideas of freedom extended no further than their own ranks, for, unless we except the province of Biscay, the common people throughout Spain were strangers to its blessings.

The struggle of feeling called forth on this occasion may be estimated by the fact that the grandees unanimously decreed that an annual festival should be given, at the expense of their body, to the Conde de Lara and his descendants, for the firmness and readiness with which, in this unexpected emergency, he had stood up in defence of their rights, at a time when the amazement with which

¹ Depping's Spanish Romances, pp. 193-4.

the deliberate old nobles had been seized by the propositions of the king, quite incapacitated them from acting.

This was not the only instance in which the vigorous mind of King Alphonso the Good planned schemes, many of them too more successful in their results, for the solid prosperity of his kingdom. He was especially anxious to promote the welfare of the lower orders among his subjects, and his attention to the agricultural peasantry, then so completely disregarded and despised, brought upon him the censures of several of the contemporary chroniclers¹, as displaying a meanness of spirit unworthy his elevated rank;—little aware were either he or they that these very measures would secure for him the respect and admiration of succeeding ages. The Jews too, then so universally the subjects of the bitterest persecution, were taken under his protection². Indeed, all his public proceedings show him to have been an enlightened prince, and his love of learning, his zeal for the church, the gallantry and success with which he defended his kingdom against the attacks of his ambitious neighbours, and, above all, his glorious victories over the Moors, enshrined his memory in the hearts of the Castilians, who long looked upon the reign of Alphonso the Noble, as one of the sunny periods in their history.

Without fully coinciding with the opinion of Robert of St. Michael³, the worthy godfather of Queen Leonor, that *all* his wise and praiseworthy acts are to be attributed *solely* to her influence, we may yet believe that she warmly co-operated in his projects of amelioration, and was in several instances their originator. That Alphonso was greatly attached to his beautiful wife is uniformly testified by contemporary historians, and the public deeds in

¹ Chronique de St. Denis, p. 381. Rigord., p. 42; and Gul. Armor, de Gestis Phil. Aug., p. 72, Bouquet, vol. xvii.

² Raynaldus, Annales Eccles., vol. x., p. 229.

³ Pistorius, vol. i., p. 932.

which he almost invariably associates her name with his own, a proceeding then very unusual in Castile, bear ample witness to the same fact¹; and well did the Lady Leonor repay his fond devotion, by an affection which remained undiminished throughout the long course of her married life, and of which her death afforded the last and strongest proof.

The years of peace which followed upon the conclusion of the treaty with the King of Navarre, were spent by Alphonso in making progresses through different parts of his dominions, to attend in person to the administration of justice, to punish abuses, and to establish good order among his subjects, and wherever he went, he bestowed liberal benefactions upon the monastic orders. In all these journeyings, he was accompanied by his queen, who was now springing up to womanhood, and old enough to fulfil in reality the duties of the station which for several years she had nominally occupied². On their return to Toledo, they were engaged in superintending improvements in the capital, especially the re-building of the walls, which had become greatly dilapidated. Several other towns were either built or fortified at this time by the provident care of the king. He established too the military order of the knights of St. James, the patron saint of Castile, which he loaded with gifts and honours³. This order, the second in antiquity⁴, was long one of the richest and most powerful in Spain⁵, and is still held in high estimation;—the mark of distinction is a bloody sword⁶.

¹ Colmenar, *Hist. de Segovia*, pp. 149, 154-5. *Chron. Don Alon.*, pp. 129, 137, 141, &c. Morales, *Noticias Historicas del Archivo de Urles*, p. 13. Munez de Castro, *Coron. Don Alonso*, pp. 83, 104, 125, 157, 168.

² Colmenar, *ut supra*.

³ Mariana, p. 534. Franciscus Terapha, *de Reg. Hisp.*, p. 708.

⁴ That of Calatrava was the first. Ferrera, vol. iii., p. 461.

⁵ Dominiani Goes, *Belus*, vol. ii., p. 1239.

⁶ *Geneal. Reg. Hisp.*, *Belus*, vol. ii., p. 1256. *Manual of Rank and Nobility*, p. 401. Anselme, *Palais de l'Honneur*, p. 148.

In this as well as many other of the earlier acts of this monarch, may be traced that chivalric ardour for conquest against the Moors, enemies alike of his faith and his country, which state policy compelled him for so many years to restrain, but which shed such a halo of splendour round his last years. He was still harassed by endless dissensions with the Kings of Leon, Navarre and Aragon, and to attempt foreign invasion, leaving such powerful enemies behind him, and close upon his dominions, would have been such an act of imprudence as Alphonso the Good was never guilty of. The details of these petty warfares are too uninteresting to be entered into—it was now Leon and Castile against Aragon and Navarre, now Castile and Aragon against Navarre, again the other three states united against Castile, keeping up a series of almost unceasing negotiation and turmoil¹, and more than once the King of Navarre even had recourse to an alliance with the infidels, against his powerful neighbours. At length the arrival of the papal legate Lucius, sent on express commission to settle the disturbances of these Christian princes, restored some degree of order amongst them.

About 1180, the tenth year after her marriage, Queen Leonor, then only in her nineteenth year, gave birth to a son, who was named Sancho, after his paternal grandfather; the title of king was immediately conferred upon him by his proud father; but to the great regret of his parents, the infant only lived a few months². Their sorrow was however shortly alleviated by the prospect of another heir to the kingdom. In the summer of 1181, Alphonso and his queen went to spend a short time at Segovia, and here was born the Infanta Berengaria³, or Berenguella, as she is called by the Spaniards, after her grandmother, the wife

¹ Mariana, p. 540, et seq.

² Colmenar, p. 155. Roderic Sanct., Hist. Hisp., p. 359. Ferrera, vol. iii., p. 506. Chronica del Rey Don Alonso el noble por el Marques de Mondexar, p. 134. Rob. de Monte, Pist., vol. i., p. 929.

³ Ferrera, vol. iii., p. 487. Colmenar, ut supra.

of the Emperor Alphonso¹. Her exulting parents immediately caused the usual oaths of fealty to be sworn to the infant as heiress-presumptive, in default of male issue²; and to her posterity, by a series of accidents, the crown eventually descended. Her birth was regarded by her sire as an affair of no small moment, for it is alluded to in several of his charters, one of which is dated from Segovia, "when I was there with Alienora, the queen, and my daughter, the Infanta Berengaria³." To her nurse, Donna Elvira, he gave some lands in Villalperal, with the *consent*, as is said in the charter, of Leonor and Berengaria⁴. It was probably to honour the birth of this child that King Henry II. sent his daughter the same year a magnificent present of clothes and plate, particularly silver vases, very costly description⁵.

The birth of Berengaria was followed in rapid succession by those of her sisters Uraca, Blanche⁶, Constanca⁷, Matilda, Sancha, and another whose name has not tran-

¹ Ferrera, vol. iii., p. 442.

² Chron. Don Alonso, p. 65.

³ Colmenar, Hist. de Segovia, p. 155. The Marquess of Mondexar, Chron. Don Alon., p. 65, and Ferrera, vol. iii., p. 487, both quote a document, in which the birth of Berengaria is alluded to as having taken place in 1171; and the former writer quotes another, to prove that her brother Ferdinand was born in 1173. But the extreme juvenility of Alphonso and Leonor, the former of whom would be only fifteen, and the latter eleven, in 1171, compels us to reject even documentary evidence on the subject, in the absence of opportunities of examining the records in question. As the allusions they contain are not to the birth of the children, but simply to their existence, the mistake may have arisen from the confounding of the Spanish æra, which began thirty-eight years before Christ, with the Christian æra. Both the charters referred to are said to be dated according to the Spanish æra; but supposing this to be a mistake, the true date of each would fall thirty-eight years later. A well-authenticated statement of the years of the birth of Eleanor's children may be found in Chifletius' *Vindiciæ Hispanicæ*, pp. 383-7.

⁴ The original charter is in the Archives of Arlanca. Munez de Castro, *Coronica del Rey Don Alonso*, p. 168.

⁵ Pipe Roll, 27 Henry II., London and Middlesex.

⁶ Born in Placentia in 1188. Archives of Arlanca, Letter v., No. 124, from Chron. Don Alon., p. 173, note.

⁷ Alb. Trium Font., Bouquet, vol. xviii., p. 780.

spired, the last-named three of whom died in their infancy¹. But still no male heir to his throne gladdened the heart of the king, and his eldest daughter, the Infanta Berengaria, began to assume an important position in her father's court as his probable heiress. As such, her hand was a prize worth obtaining, and it was solicited by Conrad, son of the Emperor Frederic Barbarossa. His request was agreed to, and the contract signed by the emperor on the 23rd of April, 1188. It was arranged on the part of Alphonso that, in default of male heirs, his daughter should inherit all his possessions, saving only the dower-lands of her mother, so long as she lived². Conrad soon afterwards came over to Spain, in order to perform his devotions at the far-famed shrine of St. James of Compostella, and afterwards to claim his bride³. A splendid court was held at Toledo, where the young German prince, attended by Raymond, son of the Earl of Toulouse⁴, received the honours of knighthood from the hands of his intended father-in-law⁵.

Another prince also shared this honour. This was Alphonso, son of Ferdinand of Leon, who, by the recent decease of his father, had become sovereign of that kingdom, and now attended the Castilian Court; and to show his respect for his powerful cousin and neighbour, the King of Castile, chose him as his father-in-arms, and kissed his hand in open court⁶.

Queen Eleanor and her elder daughters were present at this ceremony, but the appearance and manners of Conrad

¹ Mendoça, p. 47 b. Garibay, *Compend. Hist. d'España*, vol. ii., p. 718. Mariana, p. 541. Lucas Tudensis, *Schottus, Rer. Hisp. Script. Ant.*, vol. iv., p. 107.

² *Chron. del Rey Don Alon.*, pp. 166-7.

³ Ferrera, vol. iii., p. 514.

⁴ Afterwards second husband to Joanna, younger sister to Queen Eleanor.

⁵ Ferrera, *ut supra*. Rodericus, *Archiep. Toletanus, Belus, Rer. Hisp. Script. Ant.*, vol. i., p. 261.

⁶ *Rod. Archb. Tol.*, p. 261.

do not seem to have made a favourable impression upon the queen, for when shortly afterwards he requested permission to take his plighted bride back with him to Germany, it was refused. The disinclination of the infanta herself to this alliance has generally been assigned as the reason of its being thus broken off¹; but Berengaria was then only in her eighth year, and therefore cannot be supposed to have had much choice in the matter, except as she was influenced by her mother. But to Leonor, brought up as she had been amidst the luxuries of the sunny South, the thoughts of the bleak airs of Germany, the reserved stiffness of the manners of its inhabitants, and the long distance that would then separate from her the child she so tenderly loved, were all alike repulsive. Whether it might be that the presence of the King of Leon had even then suggested to her discerning mind that scheme which she afterwards so fortunately executed, of uniting the two crowns by the marriage of young Alphonso with her daughter, is not stated; but, at any rate, the German alliance was given up, a divorce being pronounced by Gonzalvo, Archbishop of Toledo². Conrad had the less reason to regret this affair, since an event occurred the ensuing year which for a while interfered with the brilliant prospects of the Lady Berengaria. This was the birth of her brother, the infant Ferdinand, which took place at Cuença on Wednesday, the 29th of November, 1189, and was the cause of the most unbounded satisfaction both to the king and his subjects³.

This happy circumstance is joyfully alluded to by Alphonso in a charter bearing date 1189, the "year when *King* Ferdinand, the illustrious son of King Alphonso and his wife, Queen Alienora, was happily born at Cuença,"

¹ Rod. Arch. Toledo, p. 261. Mariana, p. 541. Garibay, vol. ii., pp. 718-19.

² Rod. Arch. Toledo, p. 261.

³ Mariana, p. 541. Ferrera, vol. iii., p. 515.

and the name of the infant is thenceforward associated with that of his parents in the state documents. His birth was shortly followed by that of another daughter, called Leonor¹.

The summer of 1190 was spent at Burgos, where, on the 21st of June, Alphonso bestowed upon the abbey of Fontevraud an annual grant of 100 marks of gold, which he had promised ever since his marriage. The charter was given in the presence of "my wife, Queen Eleanora, and Ferdinand, my son²." The queen's influence is distinctly traceable in this grant, for, independently of her, Alphonso could not be supposed to take interest in this Norman monastery. The names of the queen and prince are also associated with that of Alphonso in a grant made in 1194 of the monastery of St. Peter's de Gumiel to the Cistercian monks³.

The greatest harmony prevailed in the numerous family of the talented and amiable Eleanora. The tender attachment subsisting between her and her lord had such a beneficial influence upon their children, that the domestic happiness of Alphonso the Good was the subject of admiration, and perhaps of a little envy too, over half his kingdom.

But the attention of the monarch was frequently claimed by his important state affairs. After years of unsuccessful effort, he had at length succeeded in inducing the neighbouring princes to form an alliance with him against the Moors, and glowing with chivalrous enthusiasm, he made the most energetic efforts to collect and consolidate his troops. The trumpet-clang of war again rang through the vine-clad hills and romantic valleys of Castile, still resounding with the glorious deeds of the Cid, Ruy Diez

¹ Garibay, vol. ii., p. 718.

² Pavillon, Vie de Robert d'Arbrissel, p. 618, quoted in Brequigny's *Diplomata Franciæ*, vol. iv., p. 126.

³ *Annal. Cisterc.*, vol. iii., p. 283.

el Campeador, which, in the glowing and impassioned ballads of Spain, were still breathed forth in song from every peasant-hearth in the land. Heart and hand at once responded to the call. The good sword was taken down from the walls where it had so long hung in peace, and the banner once more unfurled against the infidel; and with a gallant army of Castilian warriors, all cheerfully following their idolized sovereign, and burning with valour, Alphonso took the field.

Meanwhile the Moors had not been idle. Their countrymen from Africa, the Arabs and the Ethiopians, had flocked to their aid, and an army so immense, that in the figurative language of the day it was said to dry up the rivers, and level the rocks in its resistless course, congregated on the plains of Alcarcos¹. Hither also assembled the comparatively small band of the Christian warriors. The troops of Navarre and Leon, whose aid had been promised, still delayed to come up², and a council of war was held as to the best course to be pursued. The oldest and wisest of the assembly advised that the battle should be postponed till the arrival of the allied troops rendered the forces of the two armies less disproportionate; but there were others who, impatient to display their valour, argued that it would be far more glorious to attack the enemy single-handed than to have their dangers and triumphs shared by others.

This gallant but fatal counsel prevailed. The armies joined battle on Wednesday, the 19th of July, 1195, and the Christian host, which scarcely numbered one to ten with the swarms of its opponents, was almost swept away from the face of the ground³. Fifty thousand are reported to have been slain in the fight, but it is doubt-

¹ Roderic of Toledo, p. 263. Mariana, p. 542.

² Rod. Arch. Tol., p. 264.

³ Chron. Rob. Altissidor, p. 261, Bouquet, vol. xviii. Luc. Tud., p. 108. Mariana, p. 542.

ful whether the whole army ever amounted to that number¹.

Alphonso displayed great personal bravery on this occasion, and it was only by the strenuous exertions of his attendants that he was rescued from the peril to which he exposed himself, in his frenzied desire to die rather than to survive a defeat².

The town of Alcarcos was taken, and so completely destroyed by the Arabs, that only part of the cathedral of Notre Dame was left standing, which Mariana tells us³ still remained in his day, and was resorted to with pilgrim reverence by the inhabitants, on account of its connexion with a day so disastrous.

One of the Spanish romancing historians informs us that this defeat was a judgment of heaven upon Alphonso for having forsaken his wife, towards whom he had conceived a disgust, and formed a most passionate attachment to a beautiful young Jewess, with whom for seven years he had lived on terms of criminal intimacy, and who so fascinated his regard, that his queen and his kingdom were alike neglected. He adds, that the grandees of Castile, scandalized by such a proceeding, had taken up the cudgels in behalf of their injured queen, and having seized her beautiful rival, caused her to be put to a cruel death, seeing no hope of otherwise inducing their sovereign to quit her, and that the agony of grief and despair which seized Alphonso when he heard of this catastrophe almost deprived him of reason, till, to crown the marvellous tale, one night an angelic form appeared to him, in the form of a young man, august in majestic beauty, threatening him with the most terrible punishments if he persisted in the indulgence of such unworthy regrets, and promising him

¹ Rigordus, p. 42. Gul. Armor. de Gestis Phil. Aug., p. 72, Bouquet, vol. xvii.

² Rod. Arch. Tol., p. 263.

³ Schottus, vol. ii., p. 543.

all sorts of happiness if he would subdue them. By this means he was frightened into compliance, ceased to lament his murdered mistress, became reconciled to his queen, and built a chapel to our Lady on the spot where the vision had appeared to him¹. This story however runs so counter to the testimony of all the contemporary historians, by whom Alphonso is represented as a model of conjugal fidelity, that, founded as it is solely on the authority of a writer of romance, it cannot be considered worthy of credit.

Great was the consternation that pervaded all classes of the people when the news of the terrible discomfiture at Alcarcos became known. The Kings of Navarre and Leon, who had treacherously left their brave ally to struggle alone, calmly waiting at a distance the result of the conflict, now led off their troops, and returned home. Although the King of Leon paid his gallant namesake the compliment of a visit of condolence, his expressions of sympathy cannot be supposed to have been very cordially received². The dejection of Alphonso himself was deep in proportion to the buoyant exhilaration with which he had entered upon a war from which he had hoped so much, and it was fully shared by his loving consort. With that reverend recognition of the guiding hand of a superintending Providence regulating human affairs, in itself so just and true, yet so wofully misapplied by the superstitious notions of the day, in which every criminal act was believed to be followed by punishment more or less immediate in this life, and every act of virtue by a corresponding reward, Queen Leonor attributed the ill success of her spouse to the displeasure of heaven for some neglect of religious duty, and persuaded him to atone for all past misdeemeanours by the erection of a monastery for Cistercian

¹ Romance del Rey Don Alonso y dela Judia, Sepulveda, Romances y Historias de Espana, p. 133 b. Mariana has given currency to this tale, by transcribing it into his History of Spain. Schottus, vol. ii., p. 143.

² Rod. Arch. Tol., p. 264.

nuns near Burgos, whither the royal family had now retired¹.

The stately fabric of the Huelgas, consecrated to the Virgin Mary, was accordingly raised. The prelude of the foundation charter runs thus: "I, Don Alonzo, by the grace of God King of Castile, and my wife, the Queen Donna Leonor, with consent of our daughters, Berenguela and Uraca, desiring to atone for our sins, that we may hereafter have a place amongst the saints²," &c. The charter goes on to endow the abbey with rich revenues and extensive possessions, "that the holy virgins dedicated to God might chant their sacred services day and night, and feel no want or deficiency, but in these cloistered walls, and within the precincts of the church, might, free from worldly care, constantly delight themselves in holy contemplations and praises³." Nor was this all. The king and queen also erected a very extensive hospital near the monastery, where all pilgrims were to be received and hospitably entertained for a day and a night; and those that were sick were to remain there with all proper provision for their wants, and with pious women to nurse and tend them until they were completely recovered⁴. These benevolent acts call forth the most lavish expressions of admiration from the monkish chroniclers of Spain, who do not hesitate to promise to Alphonso and Leonor every possible happiness for this world, as well as crowns of eternal life, in reward for their munificent benefactions.

Another establishment, though of a different character, was founded about this time, which we shall be disposed to regard as of at least equal importance. This was the Academy of Placentia, still one of the most flourishing

¹ Rod. Arch. Tol., p. 265. Rod. Sanct., Hist. Hisp., p. 361. Luc. Tud., Chron. Mundi, p. 109. Chron. Don. Alon., pp. 156-7.

² Munez de Castro Chron. Don Alonso, p. 146.

³ Rod. Arch. Tol., p. 265. Garibay, vol. ii., p. 734.

⁴ Rod. Arch. Tol., p. 266. Luc. Tud., ut supra.

learned institutions in Spain¹. According to the account given by Rodrigo, Archbishop of Toledo, Alphonso's chancellor, by whose influence it was established, "the king called together wise men from Gaul and the Indies, that the wholesome discipline of learning might never be absent from the kingdom, and assembled masters of all sorts, to whom he gave large stipends, that to every one wishing to study, in whatever branch, wisdom might distil like manna²."

All these donations however failed of producing the desired effect of conciliating adverse fortune, for the kingdom was reduced to a most deplorable condition. The Moors, rendered bold by recent success, ravaged the country to within six leagues of the walls of Toledo; and but for the strong fortifications erected by Alphonso in the earlier part of his reign, the capital itself would have been in danger. For two years were these inroads continued. The incessant quarrels with the traitorous Kings of Leon and Navarre, who acted in concert with the infidels against him, prevented Alphonso from adequately defending himself, and he was reluctantly compelled to conclude a truce of fifteen years with the Moors³.

The next event of importance that occupied the attention of the royal family was a second negotiation for the marriage of the Princess Berengaria.

Queen Leonor had long viewed with anxiety the ceaseless troubles brought upon her husband by his dissensions with the neighbouring princes, and ardently desired a cessation of them, and she formed a plan to secure a permanent alliance with Leon by the marriage of her daughter with King Alphonso, whose divorce from his former wife, Teresa of Portugal, effected probably in anticipation of

¹ Ferrera, vol. iv., p. 17. Luc. Tud., ut supra. Garibay, ut supra.

² Ibid., p. 266.

³ Rod. Arch. Tol., p. 264.

this union, had left his hand at liberty¹. This politic step met with some opposition from her lord. The frequent injuries he had received from the Leonese king had irritated him too sorely to render him willing at once to forget all, and contract so near an alliance with him; and the nobles of Leon, who were extremely anxious about it, had in vain endeavoured to obtain his concurrence. But the influence of Eleanora was strongly exerted on the occasion, and she so far prevailed with the king by her representations and entreaties, that, unable to refuse so beloved a pleader, he not only gave his consent to the marriage, but agreed to restore to his elect son-in-law all the places which during the late skirmishings he had taken away². The sagacious forethought of Leonor, "the noble wife of King Alphonso, a most prudent woman, who skilfully attended to the many perils which could be avoided by this marriage," is highly commended by the Archbishop of Toledo³. But the difficulties were not yet over. The young damsel herself, who was now nineteen years old, manifested a great disinclination to the match. Whether the person or character of her elect bridegroom, who had been several times a visitor at her father's court, and therefore must have been well known to her, were disagreeable, or whether her reluctance were caused by her unwillingness to leave the home where she had spent so many years of domestic happiness, we are not informed; but it required all the fond remonstrances and caresses of maternal love to induce this spirited princess to submit to a union which brought with it present peace, and ultimately tended so greatly to promote the prosperity of Castile by uniting its crown with that of Leon⁴.

Preparations were accordingly made for the marriage of

¹ Rod. Arch. Tol., p. 261.

² Garibay, vol. ii., p. 731. Ferrera, vol. iii., p. 531. Rod. Arch. Tol., p. 264.

³ Belus, vol. i., p. 264.

⁴ Mariana, pp. 544-5. Rod. Tol., p. 261.

the Infanta Berengaria, which was celebrated with great splendour at Valladolid, where the Kings of Castile had a stately palace¹, in presence of both monarchs. The bridegroom, pleased with the beauty and accomplishments of his bride, presented her with costly gifts, suitable for such nuptials²; and after a few days spent in bridal festivities, the newly-wedded pair set out for Leon, where they were most enthusiastically welcomed³, and Alphonso, with his queen and their now diminished family, took their departure for Burgos.

Shortly after this marriage another, less expected, but still more illustrious, took place. The circumstances under which John, King of England, concluded, in the year 1200, a treaty with Philip of France, are well known. One of the terms was, that Prince Louis, Philip's eldest son, should espouse one of the princesses of Castile, niece to John, and receive with her the provinces of Berry and Auvergne, which had been long contested between the crowns, and which John was not willing unconditionally to relinquish⁴, together with a portion of 30,000 marks of silver; and the English queen-dowager, Eleanora of Aquitaine, was commissioned to take a journey to Castile for the purpose of demanding the hand of her grand-daughter⁵. She was accompanied by the ambassadors of King Philip, who came to escort the princess to France, and also as it would seem to have an influence in the election of their future queen⁶.

Great was the joy in the royal court, then held at Burgos, when the arrival of the queen-mother was announced; and as it was the first time she had ever visited

¹ Colmenar, *Delices de l'Esp.*, vol. i., p. 196.

² Rod. Arch. Tol., p. 264.

³ Ibid. Garibay, vol. ii., p. 731. Mariana, p. 546. Ferrera, vol. iii., p. 531.

⁴ Paris, vol. i., p. 200. Hoveden, p. 454 b. Oudergherst, *Chron. de Fland.*, chap. xciii., p. 156.

⁵ Hoveden, *ut supra*.

⁶ Mariana, p. 546.

her daughter and son-in-law, every arrangement was made for her suitable reception¹. Although the Castilian king and queen do not appear to have been at all consulted in the bestowal of the hand of their child by her uncle and grandmother, yet their consent to her marriage with the heir of the French monarchy could scarcely be doubtful, and it was accordingly gladly yielded.

The two elder infantas of Castile, who were considered to have arrived at a marriageable age, were Uraca and Blanche. The future queen, and so long able regent of France, is said to have owed her elevation solely to the soft-sounding name which she inherited from her paternal grandmother, Blanche of Navarre², and which suited the tastes of the ambassadors; for although her elder sister Uraca was exceedingly pleasing in person³, her name sounded so harshly in their ears, that she was rejected in favour of her younger sister, the Lady Blanche⁴. The marriage was accordingly decided upon, and, pleased with the anticipated honour, Alphonso and Leonor held feasts and rejoicings for many days.

The splendid dowry assigned to the princess by her uncle, King John, precluded the necessity of much preparation, and after a stay of only a few months with her daughter, the dowager-queen Eleanor, with her granddaughter, the bride-elect, and the French ambassadors, took her departure. They were accompanied as far as Guienne by the Castilian king and queen, and almost the whole court. Here Leonor took a tender farewell of her

¹ Ferrera, vol. iii., p. 538.

² Rod. Arch. Tol., pp. 254-6.

³ Chron. del Rey Don Alon., p. 240.

⁴ Those few historians who countenanced the pretensions afterwards maintained by Louis the Dauphin to the crown of England in right of his wife, strenuously assert that she was the eldest daughter of Alphonso, but this is contradicted, not only by the testimony of the contemporary historians, but by the unopposed facility with which Berengaria's descendants afterwards inherited the crown of Castile, plainly proving that they were universally considered the rightful heirs.

mother and child, and returned with her husband to Spain, while the young dauphiness-elect proceeded to Normandy, where Prince Louis joined her, and where the nuptials were solemnized, France being at that time laid under an interdict¹.

Amidst the busy scenes of her after-life, the Lady Blanche ever retained the most affectionate remembrance of the guardians of her childhood, and after their death, she ordered two masses to be said every day for the soul of her father, King Alphonso, and six masses and a solemn vigil for the soul of her mother², besides a general anniversary to be observed for them both³.

The profession of the Infanta Constance, which took place shortly after her sister's marriage, still further lessened the number of the royal family. She took the veil in the magnificent nunnery of the Huelgas, of which she afterwards, in 1205, became abbess, and which has numbered few, saving the daughters of princes or nobles, among its inmates⁴; so that of all the royal children only Uraca, Ferdinand, and Leonor, now remained with their parents; but their family received an unexpected addition in the year 1204, in the birth of another prince, at Cuença, on the 14th April, who was christened after his grandfather, Henry II. of England. He was the eleventh and last of the numerous progeny of Alphonso and Leonor⁵.

Alphonso, whose life was one of almost ceaseless turmoil, was now engaged in contests with the King of Navarre, whom he combated so successfully, that he deprived him of nearly all his lands. Open war also broke

¹ Garibay, pp. 730-1. Ferrera, vol. iii., p. 338. Hoveden, p. 456.

² Statuta Ordinis Cistersium, Martène's Thesaurus Anecd., vol. iv., col. 1849.

³ Thes. Anec., vol. iv., cols. 1383, 1395.

⁴ Mendoça, p. 47 b. Alphons. Carthag., Belus, vol. ii., p. 652. Castro, Coronic. de Don Alonso, p. 149.

⁵ Garibay, vol. ii., p. 732. Ferrera, vol. iv., p. 6. Colmenar, p. 167.

out between him and his brother-in-law, King John of England, with reference to the province of Gascony, which had been ceded by Henry II. to his daughter Eleanor as her marriage dowry, but to which King John advanced a claim¹. The lands had originally been *privately* granted by Henry, who feared opposition on the part of his counsellors, and this was probably the cause of the present contests².

This war took place in the year 1205, as is proved by a charter preserved among the historical records of the dukes of Gascony, which is dated in 1205, "when King John was at war with Alphonso, King of Castile, for the province of Gascony³." But the seeds of discord had existed for several years previously, as we find from state documents dated in 1202 and 1203, in which the quarrels between Alphonso and King John are alluded to⁴.

Queen Leonor acted as a mediator on this occasion between her husband and brother, and in the following year we find a safe conduct granted to her, and "to all those whom she shall choose to bring with her, to come to my lord the king⁵." She went accordingly, and very skilfully and successfully did she manage the commission entrusted to her, for the province was finally ceded to her by the English king. This is the only visit of which we have a distinct record paid by the Castilian queen to her own relations; but the contiguity of her dominions to those of Aquitaine, and the friendly intercourse maintained between herself and her family, which is evident from the constant occurrence of safe conducts, letters of credentials to am-

¹ Garibay, vol. ii., p. 734.

² Cotton MS., Claudius, D., vi., f. 26 b., col. 2.

³ Marca, Hist. des Ducs de Bearn, p. 505. See also Chron. Burdegal, D'Estiennot, Fragm. Hist. Aquit., vol. ix., p. 326.

⁴ Rotuli Literarum Patentium, 3°, 4° Joh. Regis, pp. 6 and 28 in the volume of the Patent Rolls of King John, published by the Record Commission, under the able editorship of T. D. Hardy, Esq., F.S.A., Keeper of the Tower Records.

⁵ Rymer's Fœdera, vol. i., pt. i., p. 94., sub ann. 1206.

bassadors, &c., especially during the lifetime of her mother¹, render it extremely probable that she was a frequent visitor at the court of Aquitaine or Normandy.

Her return to Spain was speedily followed by the marriage of her daughter, the Infanta Uraca, with Alphonso, King of Portugal². She had been previously betrothed to the King of Aragon, probably by her mother's arrangement, in hopes of procuring settled peace between Castile and Aragon; but the heiress of Montpellier had been chosen in her place, and therefore this new match was proposed for her, and completed with due state³. Uraca inherited her mother's virtues, and was celebrated for the purity and sanctity of her character.

The next few years were passed in uninterrupted peace in the prosecution of those numerous schemes of public improvement which Alphonso, aided by his queen, eagerly carried on whenever a short breathing-time was allowed him. Their only interruption was occasioned by the return of Queen Berengaria of Leon.

The restless and turbulent disposition of the Leonese king had previously led to some disturbance, from his asserting that the lands he had received at the time of his marriage were only his own patrimony, and requesting some addition as Berengaria's dowry. Alphonso, to please his wife and daughter, settled several cities upon their young heir, his infant grandson, Ferdinand, besides bestowing additional lands on Berengaria⁴. But now a fresh source of trouble arose. The near affinity between the houses of Castile and Leon rendered a dispensation from the Pope necessary, to secure the validity of the marriage of Alphonso and Berengaria. This important preliminary having been neglected, the Pope pronounced the union to

¹ Rot. Lit. Patent., 9° et 16° Joh. Regis, pp. 79, 119, 119 b. Rot. Cartarum, 1° et 2° Joh. Regis, pp. 34 b, 58 b, 59, 96 b. Stapleton's Rotuli Scaccarii Normanniæ, vol. ii., p. 352.

² Ferrera, vol. iv., p. 17. Chron. Don Alon., p. 214.

³ Mariana, p. 546. Chron. Don Alon., ut supra.

⁴ Zurita, vol. i., p. 92.

be unlawful, and laid the kingdom of Leon under an interdict, so long as they should remain together¹. They braved it out for a short period; but at length Berengaria, who was only too willing to part from a spouse whom she had never truly loved, repaired with her infant sons, Ferdinand and Alphonso, to her father's court. Her children were however declared to be legitimate, and her dowry lands restored to her².

Years had now rolled away since the battle of Alcarcos had inflicted upon the Christians in Spain a wound, the smart of which still rankled in the heart of the Castilian king. The long truce with the Moors had at length expired; the national spirit was arising, and the songs of the troubadour bards were invoking all Christian princes to purchase a crown of glory by marching against the infidels. "King of Castile," said one of these³, "lend no ear to the false reports of your enemies, neither be discouraged by your misfortunes. God teaches you by them to put your trust in him alone." Alphonso was now placed in more favourable circumstances by the matrimonial alliances which had been formed with the kings of Leon and Portugal, and he resolved to make another grand attack upon the infidels⁴. To this determination he was further incited by the fiery courage of his eldest son, the Infant Ferdinand. The earliest recollections of the boyhood of this prince were of the deep and indignant sorrow with which his parents had mourned the defeat of Alcarcos, and he had ever afterwards cherished a burning desire to avenge it. His enthusiasm had been afresh kindled by receiving the honours of knight-hood from the hand of his royal father in the church of

¹ Ferrera, vol. iv., pp. 3, 4.

² Ibid., vol. iv., p. 6. Rod. Arch. Tol., p. 261. Mariana, p. 548.

³ Fouquet of Marseilles, Bishop of Toulouse. His life is given by Saint Palais, in his *Histoire des Troubadours*. He was afterwards a prominent character in the prosecution of the unfortunate Albigenses, under Raymond VII., Earl of Toulouse.

⁴ Mariana, p. 548.

Burgos¹, and he used the most eloquent entreaties to induce his sire forthwith to wipe off this disgrace. "My son," answered the proud father, as he looked on the earnest face and lofty bearing of his gallant heir, "had I many such men as thou in my army, or had I not already proved the strength of the enemy, I would fear nothing. But we will try. It is better to risk our fortune in war, by the help of heaven, than to see our country's miseries²."

Their warlike operations were expedited by a successful attack of the Moors upon the district of Salvaterra, the castle of which was taken after a long and terrible siege³. The concern felt by the king on this occasion appears from a sorrowful letter he wrote to the Pope, and it roused him to fresh exertions⁴.

Alphonso had an interview with the Kings of Leon, Navarre, and Aragon, at Alfaro, where they entered into a mutual league against the infidels⁵, and he afterwards held a colloquy with his nobles and prelates, in which it was unanimously resolved that the most vigorous steps should be taken. Orders were issued throughout Castile that every knight and foot-soldier, leaving behind him all superfluous vestments, all gold and jewels, and provided only with what was absolutely necessary, should resort to the place of meeting at Talavera⁶. While Alphonso set off on a military expedition in one direction, a large body of troops was placed under the command of young Ferdinand, who, entering Andalusia, ravaged the whole province, beating and driving before him the bands of the enemy who were sent to oppose his progress, and then went back in triumph to Madrid, whither the two queens,

¹ Ferrera, vol. iv., p. 21.

² Rod. Sanct. Hist. Hisp., p. 361. Romance de la Mémorable Batalla de las Navas de Tolosa, Sepulveda, Romances y Historias de Espano, p. 146.

³ Rod. Arch. Tol., p. 266. Ferrera, vol. iv., p. 24.

⁴ Raynaldus, Annal. Eccles., vol. i., p. 383.

⁵ Mariana, p. 548.

⁶ Rod. Tol., ut supra.

Leonor and Berengaria, had journeyed to meet their royal relatives¹. Ferdinand was warmly welcomed on his return; but the joy of his friends was soon changed into the deepest mourning by the sudden death of the young hero. He was seized with a violent fever, the result probably of exertion and over-excitement, of which he died at Madrid, on the 14th of October, 1209². Great were the lamentations of the Castilians for one whom they had looked upon with hope and pride as their future sovereign, the very image both in mind and person of their beloved monarch Alphonso the Noble. "From the River of Jordan to the Western Ocean," says the author of a pathetic lamentation on his death³, "never was there a young king more sensibly regretted. His death is even mourned by the French, the English, and the Germans; by Spain, by Aragon, and even by the Emperor himself, for there is no Christian prince who was not either his near relative or his ally; and had he lived but one year more, he would have nobly served the cause of God against the infidels." In person and courage he was said to resemble Henry II., his grandfather; but the strong attachment of his countrymen led them to compare him to the most valiant of his maternal ancestors, the far-famed King Arthur. But sincere as was the regret of the whole Castilian nation at his loss, the desolation of the royal family, thus deprived of its pride and its flower, was far deeper and more heartfelt⁴.

The Infant was splendidly interred at the monastery of St. Mary's, or the Huelgas, at Burgos; the care of the funeral, which was attended by most of the prelates and nobles of Spain, devolving entirely upon the Archbishop

¹ Colmenar, p. 175.

² Rod. Sanct., Hist. Hisp., p. 399. Mariana, p. 548. Ferrera, vol. iv., p. 25.

³ Gerard Calancon, a troubadour of Gascony, of whom an account is also preserved by Saint Palais, in his *Histoire des Troubadours*.

⁴ Luc. Tudens, p. 111.

of Toledo and Queen Berengaria. Alphonso and Leonor mingled not in the solemnities, but in the seclusion of unutterable grief they wept together the loss of their gallant son¹.

As soon as the first emotions of sorrow had subsided, the king began to think of the persevering ardour with which his son had urged on the war with the infidels, and he determined that in the fulfilment of his last wishes he would seek his own consolation for the loss he had sustained. Assembling his troops in the following spring, he made a vigorous and most successful attack upon the Moorish territory, and after taking several fortresses, returned laden with spoils to Toledo². But Alphonso felt that to achieve anything like the mighty projects he had conceived, other energies than those under his own immediate command must be set in motion. He wrote a letter to Philip Augustus, King of France, which breathes a spirit of firm but melancholy self-devotion, professing his fixed determination to fight the infidels, yet foreboding for himself a fatal issue to the expedition, from the extreme disproportion of forces on the two sides. He declares himself willing to die for the Christian faith, and entreats Philip to send him help³. He also sent the Archbishop of Toledo to Rome to solicit from the Pope permission to preach a general crusade against the Moors in Spain. Consent was readily granted, and the able and eloquent prelate forthwith took his course through Italy, Germany, and all the provinces of France, representing the miseries endured by the Spanish Christians, the glory of fighting to extirpate the infidel, and promising, as usual, a full remission of all past offences and endless happiness to those who should fall in the conflict⁴.

¹ Rod. Arch. Tol., p. 267. Colmenar, p. 175. Mariana, p. 548.

² Ibid.

³ Baluzius Miscellanea, vol. iii., p. 93.

⁴ Mariana, p. 548.

The general rendezvous was appointed to take place early in the following year, 1212, at Toledo, the only city which, from its size and wealth, was able to bear the burden of the hosts that rapidly accumulated within its walls¹. In the month of February they began to assemble. All the spring their numbers were continually increasing, until the city was no longer able to contain the thronging multitudes. By the provident care of King Alphonso, tents were then erected under the trees in the green meadows on the banks of the Tagus, which had been enclosed to form a place of pleasant retirement and recreation for the royal family². Notwithstanding the numerous bands which were thus congregated together from almost every part of Europe, the utmost order and harmony prevailed throughout the crowded city and its suburbs, owing to the vigorous and unremitting exertions of Alphonso the Good and his minister, the Archbishop of Toledo, to whose minute and animated details of scenes at which he was present, and in which he bore a prominent part, we are indebted for much valuable information.

The city of Toledo must have presented an animated and interesting spectacle, filled with warriors of so many different nations and languages, who, with their varied costumes and glittering armour, formed into busy groups in its streets, or reclined before the doors of their dwellings, basking in the luxuriant sunshine of a Spanish sky; while beyond the walls, their white tents erected on the banks of the river, which washed two sides of the town, and the quiet meadows and groves teeming

¹ Rod. Arch. Tol., p. 267. This zealous prelate himself founded an order of knighthood for the defence of his country against the Moors, called the Order of the Rosary of Toledo, from one of its regulations, which was, that the members should, every day, tell over a rosary to the Virgin Mary. Such was the influence of his personal character, that, on its first institution, several of the nobility entered its ranks, but after his death, it soon fell into disrepute. *Manual of Nobility*, p. 399.

² Rod. Tol., p. 268.

with armed men, would add to the general effect of the view.

Nor would the court of Alphonso and Leonor be less devoid of interest. Those of the noblest ranks were of course entertained at the royal tables, and the fiery Italian, the phlegmatic German, the lively Frenchman, and the grave Spaniard, all blended together in a confused yet not unpleasing *melée*. Reverend prelates too were there, to consecrate by their presence the war of the Cross, among whom the Archbishop of Narbonne, who brought with him a large army of French volunteers, is specially mentioned as one of the most zealous and eminent. On his arrival, he was met by the king and the Archbishop of Toledo in person, as was also the King of Aragon, who came to join in this universal movement, and reached Toledo about Whitsuntide¹. The principal orders of European chivalry flocked to the scene of action. The Knights Templars and Hospitallers, with those of the newly-established order of St. James, hastened alike to distinguish themselves in the glorious cause².

The behaviour of Alphonso himself amidst this host of guests created universal admiration for its courteousness and prudence. Laying aside the exclusiveness of rank, he appeared among them every day with a cheerful countenance, gently restraining the ambitious, controlling the restless, and applauding wherever he could the military appearance and order of the troops. The expense he incurred was enormous, for he had not only to provide food for the soldiers, but often horses, and even money too; but he neglected nothing that was calculated to raise their spirits and fit them for their expedition³. He performed the ceremony of knighting many youths of noble descent,

¹ Rod. Arch. Tol., p. 268. Ferrera, vol. iv., p. 27.

² Ibid.

³ See Letter of Alphonso to the Pope in Raynald, under the year 1212, vol. i., p. 324, et seq.

to whom he made presents of horses and armour, exhorting them to merit their new honours in the approaching combat¹.

At length, as the Christian host amounted to the number of 10,000 horse and 100,000 foot, the leaders thought it time to be moving; and on the 20th of June Alphonso and his noble guests, taking leave of the queen and the royal family, marched out, at the head of their respective troops, in long procession, from the gates of Toledo². Public prayers were offered not only in Spain, but throughout Europe, and especially at Rome, for the prosperity of this expedition, which was regarded in the light of a holy war³.

Their first attacks were eminently successful, and several cities and fortresses of the Moors fell into their hands; but these very successes unfortunately sowed the seeds of dissension among the miscellaneous hosts. Notwithstanding the immense expense at which the Castilian king had maintained his allies, he generously renounced all claim to a share in the spoils, and left them to be divided between the King of Aragon and the foreign troops; but some ground of quarrel arose, which, though not stated, was probably connected with the distribution of the prizes, on which the whole French host, except the troops led by the Archbishop of Narbonne, abruptly broke up their tents, and took their departure from Spain⁴. Their place was however in some measure filled by the arrival of the Navarrese soldiers, headed by King Sancho in person⁵.

The diminution of force in the Christian army encouraged Mahomet Miramolin, the leader of the Moors, to

¹ Rod. Arch. Tol., p. 269.

² Ibid., p. 270.

³ Mariana, p. 552. Raynald, *Annl. Eccles.*, vol. i., p. 323. Ferrera, vol. iv., p. 27.

⁴ Rod. Tol., p. 270. Ferrera, vol. iv., p. 30.

⁵ Rob. Altiss., p. 280, Bouquet, vol. xviii.

venture to meet them in set battle¹. Some difficulties occurred in the passage of the Ferral Mountains, which were occupied by the advanced guard of the infidel host, but they were surmounted by the aid of a peasant, who guided the Christians along a bye-path in the mountains, and on Saturday, the 14th of July, 1212, the two armies came in sight of each other on the plains (called in Spanish *las Navas*) of Tolosa². The morrow was to both these mighty hosts a period of intense excitement; for Alphonso, with praiseworthy respect for the sanctity of the day, would not permit the attack to be made till the Monday, and all felt that they were on the eve of a desperate and decisive conflict. The night was spent by the Christian warriors in the exercises of religion, making their confessions, and receiving absolution from the hands of the priests, and fortifying themselves, by partaking together of the holy sacrament, for the perils they were so soon to encounter³.

Before break of day the voices of the heralds were heard throughout both hosts summoning them to arms. Alphonso and the Moorish king each addressed a spirited harangue to their respective troops, and with loud shouts of "Allah il Allah!" and "St. James for Castile!" the furious onset commenced⁴. The battle was vehemently contested, and at first the issue was doubtful. The Archbishop of Toledo remained near the person of his royal master throughout the whole of this eventful day, and he solemnly assures us that, in the midst of the most trying changes of the fight, the king never for a moment lost his self-possession, nor by look or gesture gave indication of dismay, though he more than once expressed a firm determination to die gloriously on the field of battle rather than

¹ Mariana, p. 549. Rod. Tol., p. 271.

² Ibid. Ferrera, vol. iv., pp. 32-3.

³ Rod. Archb. Tol., p. 273.

⁴ Ibid., Mariana, p. 550.

sustain a second defeat. "Not so, sire," replied the archbishop; "if it please God, not death but a crown of victory awaits you; but if not, we are all ready and willing to die with you¹." At length the decisive moment arrived; an impetuous charge made by Alphonso in person, at the head of his reserves, which consisted of the flower of the Castilian army, turned the doubtful scale of war². The Moorish hosts fled on every side, and were pursued with terrible slaughter by the Christians, who gained a complete and glorious victory. The spoil that fell into their hands was immense. Provisions of all sorts were found in the enemy's tents, which proved very acceptable to the victors, who were beginning to suffer from hunger; and a joyous feast they had, cooking their victuals by fires made of the wood of the Pagan spears. So great was the number of warlike weapons left by the enemy, that it is said 20,000 mules were scarcely sufficient to carry them all away³. The gorgeous silken tent of Miramolin, with all its magnificent furniture, fell into the hands of the King of Aragon⁴, for the noble-minded Alphonso declared he would content himself with the glory of the action, and leave all the booty to his allies⁵. A silken tent and a banner, splendidly decorated with gold, which he sent as presents to the Pope, were all that he accepted⁶.

A solemn Te Deum was chanted by the whole Christian army, led by the Archbishop of Toledo, and joined in with the most devout gratitude by Alphonso, who felt in this exciting moment that the dying wish of his son was fulfilled, and that the reproach which had clung to him for years was at last wiped away⁷. The most unbounded

¹ Rod. Tol., p. 274. Romance de Tolosa, Sepulveda, p. 148 b.

² Mariana, p. 550.

³ Rob. Altiss., Bouquet, vol. xviii., p. 280. Rod. Arch. Tol., p. 275.

⁴ Zurita, Annal. de Arag., vol. i., p. 98.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Raynald, vol. i., p. 327.

⁷ Rod. Arch. Tol., p. 275.

transports of joy filled Castile when the news of this great victory was first rumoured, and then confirmed by the letters which Alphonso wrote to his own family to apprise them of his glorious triumph, and which were received by the queen and her daughters with the most earnest and heart-felt delight,—the more intense from the uncertainty in which they had so long remained as to the result of the campaign.

A letter is still extant¹, written on this occasion by Queen Berengaria to her sister Blanche, the Dauphiness of France, conveying the tidings of the victory of Tolosa. She alludes with something of scorn to the abandonment of the sacred cause by the French troops, requesting her sister, however, to transmit the good news as quickly as possible to the French court. She proudly mentions also the generous renunciation of the spoil by their father, King Alphonso. The whole epistle is, as might be expected, written in a strain of joyful exultation at a success almost unparalleled. Berengaria states the number of slain on the side of the Moors to have been 70,000, while the Christians only lost 200, an immense disproportion, considering the severity of the contest, but yet less than that given by Alphonso, in his letter to the Pope; he states the number of slain as twenty-five on the one side, and 100,000 on the other². Both these statements are, however, exceeded by that of the Archbishop of Toledo, who rates the Christian loss at only twenty-five, and that of the enemy at 200,000³. But this prelate was a decided lover of the marvellous. The circumstance, that the monk who bore his cross before him remained unhurt in the thickest of the fight is construed by him into an undoubted miracle, and gave rise to a variety of wonderful tales, one of which was, that immediately before the battle,

¹ In Martène's *Thes. Anecd.*, vol. i., col. 820.

² *Chron. Land.*, Bouquet, vol. xviii., p. 715.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 275.

a magnificent rainbow-coloured cross appeared in the sky, in sight of the Christian host, encouraging the hearts of the faintest. This cross formed the subject of one of those romancing ballads, which long after was associated in the minds of the Spanish peasantry with the glorious "Navas de Tolosa¹."

The banner of Alphonso, too, bearing the image of the Virgin and Child, richly emblazoned, which was carried before him on that memorable day, is said to have been the gift of the Virgin Mary, committed by her with many wonderful circumstances to an obscure priest, who unfurled it just at the critical moment, when, of course, the Pagans, as bound by every law of the marvellous, immediately fled before it².

With all the pomp of military triumph the King of Castile once more returned to his capital³. He was received by the clergy and all the people with joyful chanting and instruments of music, and conducted in procession to the church of St. Mary's, where a thanksgiving service was performed, from which, we may presume, that the queen and royal family would be the last to be absent. This being ended, he returned, similarly escorted, to his own palace⁴. Not in Castile only, but throughout Europe, were thanksgivings offered to heaven for this great victory, and the gallant monarch, under whose banners it had been achieved, was regarded with the most reverend admiration⁵. One of his first acts was to ordain a festival of thanksgiving, to be observed every year on the anniversary of the battle, in commemoration of it, to be called the Triumph of the Holy Cross⁶, when the

¹ Depping's Spanish Romances, p. 195. Rod. Sanct., p. 361. Romances de la Batalla de Tolosa, Sepulveda, Romances de Espana, p. 146.

² Rod. Tol., p. 274.

³ Luc. Tud., p. 3.

⁴ Rod. Tol., p. 276.

⁵ Mariana, p. 552.

⁶ Zurita, vol. i., p. 98. Colmenar, p. 177. Alphons. Carthag., p. 652.

banners of the Infidel, captured at Tolosa, were to be taken down from the churches in which they were religiously deposited, and displayed to the admiring gaze of the people¹.

King Alphonso spent the winter with his wife and family at Toledo, but he was busily planning schemes for taking advantage of his recent success. He took the field in the following February, 1213, but returned to Toledo to celebrate the Feast of Pentecost in the cathedral, when a solemn thanksgiving-service was performed for the late victories, in presence of Queen Leonor, her son, the Infant Henry, now heir of Castile, and her daughter Queen Berengaria of Leon, with her two children. This ceremony over, the king again joined his army; but though the campaign was at first very successful, on account of the complete prostration of the infidel force in the preceding year², he was prevented from carrying out his designs, by the effects of a drought of nine months' continuance, during which period no rain fell³, and which occasioned so severe a famine, that it was impossible to collect food for his troops, who were even reduced to the necessity of eating human flesh to satisfy the cravings of hunger. Under these circumstances, after having obtained some important advantages, Alphonso was obliged to relinquish the campaign, and to return to Toledo, where, we are informed, his queen impatiently waited for him, and received him with even more joy and tenderness than before⁴.

The most strenuous exertions were made on the part of the royal family and grandees of Toledo to alleviate the miseries of the lower orders of the people. The palaces

¹ Garibay, vol. ii., p. 742.

² Rod. Sanct., Hist. Hisp., pp. 362-3. Rod. Arch. Tol., pp. 276-7.]

³ Mariana, p. 552.

⁴ Ibid. A particular account of this campaign may be found in an epistle from Alphonso to the Pope, Innocent's Letters, Book xv., No. 182.

of the king and nobles were thrown open to the destitute, who were perishing by thousands in the streets, and they were provided for as comfortably as circumstances would permit, until the harvest-time again restored plenty to the land¹. The worthy Archbishop Roderic attributes this liberality to a very eloquent harangue which he gave forth in the cathedral, on the subject of charity, which he tells us so inflamed the hearts of his auditors, that they forthwith followed the example he himself set them of this liberal distribution of their goods².

The following summer the royal family, as usual, removed to Burgos, and from thence they shortly afterwards set out on an excursion towards the frontiers of Portugal, where Alphonso had appointed to meet his daughter, the Portuguese queen, and his son-in-law King Alphonso. Queen Leonor, her son Henry, her two daughters Berengaria and Leonor, with her young grandchildren Ferdinand and Alphonso, who seem to have been her constant and favourite companions, and several Castilian prelates, formed the party on this occasion. But the pleasant anticipations of this family re-union were doomed to a woeful and unexpected disappointment.

During the journey the king was taken suddenly and violently ill, at a small village called Galcear Meynos, and in a very few days, having received the last unction from the hands of his faithful servant and friend, the Archbishop of Toledo, he expired, at midnight on Monday, the 6th of October, 1214, in the fifty-ninth year of his age, and fifty-sixth of his reign³.

The shock produced by this event was strongly felt by every member of the royal family, for Alphonso was an affectionate father, and a faithful husband. But the sorrow of his children was as nothing compared with the

¹ Rod. Arch. Tol., p. 277.

² Ibid.

³ Ferrera, vol. iv., p. 52. Rod. Archb. Tol., p. 278. Mariana, p. 560.

anguish of the widowed Queen Leonor, when she saw the companion, with whom she had enjoyed such uninterrupted domestic happiness for forty-three years, now stretched before her a senseless corpse. Her grief was such that her health rapidly sunk under it.

The funeral obsequies of the king were performed with the greatest solemnity at the monastery, founded by himself and Leonor, at Huelgas, near Burgos¹, and attended by his queen, his children, and all the nobles and prelates of the kingdom, as well as by many of the lower classes, who flocked to pay the last tribute of respect to their adored monarch².

Leonor had been left by her husband Regent of Castile during the minority of their son Henry; but when the Cortes, assembled at Burgos, swore fealty to the young king, then only ten years of age, and expressed their cordial concurrence in her appointment as Regent³, she was unable to attend, and on the 31st of October, twenty-five days after the death of her beloved lord, the broken-hearted queen expired at Burgos, and was interred on the left-hand side of Alphonso in the monastery of Huelgas⁴, under a plain marble tomb, without epitaph, decorated only by a shield bearing a lion gules on a field argent. "The widowed queen," says Colmenar, in his simple but touching account of this melancholy event, "died of grief twenty-five days afterwards, accompanying her husband, like a most loving consort in life, death, and sepulture⁵." She died in the fifty-second year of her age, having survived every member of her father's family, excepting her youngest brother John.

¹ Alphons. Carthag., p. 652.

² Rod. Archb. Tol., p. 278. Munez de Castro, Coron. del Rey Don Alonso, p. 269.

³ Garibay, vol. ii., p. 748. Mariana, p. 565.

⁴ Rod. Arch. Tol., p. 279. Mariana, p. 565. Luc. Tud., p. 112. Zurita, Indices Aragoniæ, p. 76.

⁵ Hist. de Segovia, p. 178.

No portrait or description now remains to convey any idea of the personal appearance of this Castilian queen. The Spanish historians speak with admiration of the dignified gracefulness of her manners, her piety, and her love of learning; and although she was not herself called upon to play any prominent part on the theatre of public affairs, yet her powerful influence over her husband seems to have been judiciously exercised, and both as a wife and mother her conduct is irreproachable¹.

As for Alphonso, the contemporary chroniclers, as well as later historians, are never weary of lavishing upon him the warmest eulogiums², and every act of his life proves him to have been a good, as well as a great man. Although his reign was commenced under the most disadvantageous circumstances, which harassed him for many years, he not only surmounted them all, but greatly enlarged the boundary of his dominions, while the upright sincerity of his public transactions, his extreme liberality and disinterestedness, his love of learning and the fine arts, and the unsullied purity of his private character, entitle him to a high place in our estimation.

An instance of the dignified equanimity of his temper is preserved by a contemporary chronicler. A young Castilian of noble birth, but not otherwise distinguished, asked from him the vacant prætorship of Toledo. Alphonso refused the request on account of his youth, on which the other, with more freedom than modesty, replied, "And do you, sir king, object to me on account of my age, who yourself began to reign from your cradle? I know many who used to play with you with javelins or at

¹ Munez de Castro, *Coron. del Rey Don Alonso*, p. 269.

² "In tantum claruit præ cunctis regibus nostri temporis, ut noster non posset evolvere stylus quantâ vigeret probitate. Fuit namque sapientâ magnus, consilio providus, armis strenuus, largitate præcipuus, et fide Catholicâ roboratus."—Lucas Tudens., *Schottus*, vol. iv., p. 107. See also a long eulogy upon him in Castro's *Coron. Don Alonso*, pp. 271—277.

dice, whom you have now exalted to prætorships and honours. So I suppose you admitted them to dignities because they played with you, and you repel me because I was not born in time to be the playmate of a king." Instead of punishing the daring youth who had replied in a strain so unusual to the ears of a Spanish monarch, Alphonso, admiring his fearless sincerity, and wishing to conciliate him, dismissed him kindly, with the present of a horse and a handsome suit of armour, though he still persevered in denying his request¹.

The portraits of this king represent him with a fine intellectual cast of countenance, but rather melancholy in its expression².

A complete group of portraits of Alphonso III. and his family was painted, a few years after his death, in the nunnery of Huelgas, but unfortunately no relics of them, nor any accurate description, are now in existence. In the centre was Alphonso on horseback, just as he appeared at the famous battle of Tolosa, with the queen by his side, their two sons Sancho and Ferdinand, and four of their daughters, the Lady Blanche, Dauphiness of France, with her infant son, afterwards the celebrated St. Louis, in her arms; Uraca and Leonor, the Queens of Portugal and Aragon, and the Abbess Constance; while the famous St. Dominic, the founder of the Order of Friars-preachers, afterwards known as the Dominican monks, who flourished about this time, and was greatly patronized by the royal family of Castile, figured in one corner. Henry, who succeeded his father, occupied a separate picture below this, and above were painted Berengaria, the Queen of Leon, with her husband, dressed, as we are told, in a *pacific* vest, and her two sons, Ferdinand,

¹ Rod. Sanct., Hist. Hisp., p. 363.

² Memoria Histor. del Rey Don Alonso el Noble, Frontispiece.
 See also a drawing of him in the Cotton. MS., Vespas. C. xii. f. 16 b., said to be taken from a portrait in the Royal Hall of Alcarcos in Segovia.

afterwards King of Castile and Leon, and Alphonso¹. That this picture was painted almost immediately after the death of Alphonso and Leonor, and during the reign of Henry, is evident from the prominent position he occupies, and also from the introduction of the Infant Louis, who was born in the year 1214. It must therefore have been executed under the directions of Queen Berengaria, a lady of great spirit and ability, who inherited a large measure of her father's talent, and seems also to have shared his love of the fine arts².

The death of Queen Leonor, who had been acknowledged as undisputed Regent of Castile, gave rise to much commotion. The grandees were not equally disposed to submit to the authority of her daughter Berengaria, to whom, by her last will, she committed the guardianship of the young King Henry. His short reign was spent in continual contests for the regency between this spirited lady and the Castilian nobles³.

Henry was accidentally killed in the city of Placentia, by the blow of a tile falling from the roof of a house near which he was passing, after he had worn the crown only two years and ten months, and Berengaria was thus left heiress to the throne⁴. Her rights, however, she resigned to her eldest son Ferdinand, who was immediately proclaimed King of Castile, and afterwards, on the death of his father, who was preceded to the tomb by the two sons, the fruit of his first marriage⁵, the crown of Leon also devolved upon Ferdinand, thus again happily reuniting the two kingdoms⁶.

The Infanta Eleanora, after the death of her parents,

¹ Alphons. Carthag., Belus, vol. ii., p. 654.

² Luc. Tud., p. 109.

³ Rod. Arch. Tol., p. 279. Chron. Don Alfon., p. 274.

⁴ Ibid., p. 280. Ferrera, vol. iv., p. 64. Mariana, p. 565. Rod. Sanct., p. 366.

⁵ Zurita, vol. i., p. 3. Reusner, Basil. Stirps Geneal., p. 58.

⁶ Rod. Arch. Tol., p. 280.

was, in the year 1221, given in marriage by her sister to James, Infant, and afterwards King of Aragon¹.

Of all the other children of Queen Leonor we have spoken elsewhere. She lived to see her only surviving son a king; and her four married daughters each in due time wore the regal circlet²; so that of the Princess Eleanora it may be truly said that she was the daughter, sister, wife, mother, and grandmother of kings, and the ancestress of the races of mighty monarchs who, even now, occupy two of the most powerful thrones of Europe.

¹ Chron. Don Alon., p. 412.

² Alford, Annal. Eccles., vol. iv., p. 138.

JOANNA,

THIRD DAUGHTER OF HENRY II.

CHAPTER I.

Birth—Education at Fontevraud—Reverence for Becket—Demanded in marriage by William of Sicily—His early life—Tutors—Peter of Blois—Marriage embassy—Letter of William—Preparations—Journey—Arrival at Palermo—Splendid reception—Bridal and coronation—Dowry charter—Portrait of William—Palace of Palermo—Joanna's companions—Park of Monreale—Prosperous state of Sicily—Birth of a son—His early death—Abbey of Monreale—Becket's portrait—William's good government—Death of Joanna's brother, and of the Queen-mother—Costanza acknowledged heiress of Sicily—Her marriage—Attachment between her and Joanna—Preparations for crusade—William's battle-standard—Death of William—Burial—Conjugal tenderness—Coins—Prosperity of his reign.

JOANNA, the youngest daughter of King Henry II. and Queen Eleanor, was born at Angers, the capital of Anjou, in the October of 1165¹. Her childhood was spent principally in Normandy, where the royal family at that time resided almost more frequently than in England; and the early marriage of her two elder sisters left the little princess, when but five years old, the only remaining daughter who graced her father's court.

Amidst the scenes of family discord and disunion which

¹ Rob. de Monte, Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 309. Ann. Monast. Burton, Gale, vol. i., p. 250. Matt. West., Book ii., p. 47. Brompton, Twysden, p. 1059.

disgraced the latter part of the reign of Henry II., the situation of the royal maiden cannot have been a pleasant one, and the dissensions between her parents would render it still more painful. Her youth and sex of course prevented her from taking any decisive part in these quarrels; and amidst the tumult of political agitation, the young princess is so completely passed over, that it is impossible to ascertain with certainty any particulars of her early girlhood. We discover in the most incidental manner from John de la Mainferme, a monk of Fontevraud, that she received part of her education at that royal monastery, for, speaking of a visit paid by her to that place in after-life, he alludes to it as the place where she was brought up¹.

It is not likely, however, that she was ever destined for the cloister; her own mental temperament and the will of her royal sire would alike be opposed to such a step. Henry II. was too successful in contracting splendid alliances for his daughters to have been at all willing to give up any of them to the service of religion, and therefore the temporary residence of this princess at Fontevraud must have been merely with a view to procure for her a safe asylum, and the advantages of education, from which she was otherwise precluded. It accounts, however, for the silence of the chroniclers of Henry II. about her movements. The only circumstance which throws any light upon her disposition at this time is the extreme reverence she manifested for the memory of the talented but dangerous Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas-à-Becket². Though this prelate died when she was only six years old, he appears to have exercised over her infant mind that powerful fascination by which he so strongly influenced her eldest brother Henry, and which, far more than any

¹ Clypeus Fontis Ebraldi, tom. ii., p. 160. Vaissette, Hist. de Languedoc, vol. iii., p. 111.

² Luigi Lello, Descrizione della Chiesa di Monreale, p. 156.

actual power, rendered him such a formidable antagonist to his sovereign. It is therefore probable that Joanna would incline rather to the side of her mother than to that of the king. Indeed she possessed much of the high spirit of Queen Eleanor, though without any of her darker traits of character.

The negotiations for her marriage with her future lord were commenced at a period far antecedent to that in which it really took place, and in the intermediate time several circumstances occurred which for a while seemed likely to obstruct the design altogether. The prince who solicited the hand of the Lady Joanna, being of Norman blood, was less dissevered by origin and association from the royal family of England than the remoteness of his dominions would lead us to suppose; and this point was probably not overlooked when the match was deliberated upon¹.

William II., surnamed the Good, King of Sicily, was grandson of Roger, one of the greatest Sicilian kings of the northern dynasty, and descendant of the brave Norman chief, Robert Guiscard, who, by the force of his own valour and talents alone, won for himself and his posterity such splendid domains. Not only the kingdom of Sicily, but the dukedom of Apulia and the principality of Capua, were transmitted by him to his son and successor, William I. He, from the oppressive nature of his rule, and his eagerness in the accumulation of wealth, acquired the odious appellation of the Bad, by which he is always designated. He married Margaret, daughter of Garcia, King of Navarre², by whom he left two surviving children,

¹ Hoveden, pp. 404, 404 b.

² Testa Archiepiscopus Monreale, *De Vita et Rebus Gestis Gulielmi II., Siciliae Regis*, p. 16. This work, which is very valuable for its minute and elaborate research into the history of King William II., is extremely scarce. It is published anonymously; but a letter from Prince Tarremuzzo to Thomas Hollis, Esq., inserted in the copy of it presented by that gentleman to the British Museum, states it to be the production of the Archbishop of Monreale, to perpetuate the memory of the founder of that magnificent monastery.

William, his successor, who, on the death of his father in 1166, was only twelve years of age, and Henry, Prince of Capua, still younger.

The coronation of the young king was performed with great pomp, amidst the enthusiastic rejoicings of his subjects. His father had been greatly disliked by them, but the graceful form, handsome countenance, and gallant bearing of young William, as he was led on horseback through the streets of Palermo, enlisted all hearts in his favour¹. Margaret, the queen-mother, a woman of considerable talent and energy, was left guardian of her sons, and regent of the kingdom².

By a singular coincidence both the tutors who were employed to train the mind of the young William were associated with England. The first of these was Gualterio del Molino, as he was called in Sicily, a Briton by birth, afterwards the celebrated Archbishop of Palermo. Testa makes an odd attempt to 'translate his surname, and gives the prelate the comical appellation of *Ophamillius*, being the Latinized form for *of a mill*, which is its English signification³. The learned Englishman proved a most devoted tutor; for once, on the sudden outbreak of a sedition at Messina, he rescued his royal pupils, William and Henry, by his own personal exertions, from the destruction with which they were threatened. He wrote several works expressly for their use, by which they were initiated into the study of literature and poetry, and he early obtained over the mind of the youthful king that influence which he ever afterwards preserved⁴.

In the mean time the Court was disturbed with the factions of the nobles, each striving for office⁵, and Queen

¹ Testa, p. 26. Buonfiglio, p. 221. Fazello, Hist. de Sicil., p. 690. Hugo Falcandus, Carusius Bibliotheca Sicula, vol. i., p. 449.

² Romualdus Salernitanus, Carusius, vol. ii., p. 871.

³ Page 19, note.

⁴ Burigny, Hist de Sicile, vol. i. p. 489.

⁵ Fazello, p. 691, et seq.

Margaret, to support her authority, resolved to call in a relation of their own, Stephen, son of the Earl of Perche, whom she made her chancellor¹. He brought to Sicily in his train the far-famed Peter of Blois, whose learning procured for him at once the office of assistant-tutor to King William², which he filled with great credit, initiating him into the mysteries of science, as far as it was then known. According to his own account, he had almost the entire control of the king's education, and next to the queen-mother and Walter del Molino, elect Bishop of Palermo, had the greatest influence in the council, and regulated the affairs of the kingdom almost at pleasure. His power soon created for him rivals and enemies, who endeavoured to get rid of him by procuring his election to the archbishopric of Naples, and offering him other ecclesiastical dignities, all of which he had the steadiness to refuse³. He did not however remain long in this situation. A fresh revolution led to the expulsion of his patron, Stephen of Perche; and although Peter, being then confined with a long and dangerous illness, was unable to accompany him, yet as soon as ever he was sufficiently recovered, he demanded from his royal pupil leave to depart. But William had become attached to his master, whose epistolary talents had been of considerable service to him, and he tried to persuade him to remain, and even bribed him with the offer of the chancellor's seals⁴. But the nerves of the vivacious letter-writer had undergone such severe shocks during his short residence in Sicily, partly from the public commotions, partly from the alarm occasioned by a terrible eruption of Mount *Ætna*, and partly from his own sufferings during his recent illness, that now his sole anxiety was to get away as fast as possible from

¹ Romuald. Arch. Salern., Carusius, vol. ii., p. 872. Buonfiglio, p. 228. Fazello, p. 693.

² Testa, p. 66, Epist. Petri Blesensis, Nos. x. and xi.

³ Letter of Peter of Blois, Paris edit., fol. 1667. No. 131.

⁴ Burigny, vol. i., p. 489.

those fatal shores; and when the king perceived that his resolution was fixed, he dismissed him handsomely, making every provision for his safety during the voyage¹. It has been said that William owed the acquisition of his future bride to the influence and representations of Peter of Blois; but the horror which Peter ever after entertained of Sicily, his vehement invectives against its air, its climate, and its inhabitants, and his insinuations even against his quondam pupil, who is spoken of by him as a "mere statue," an "useless trunk," whom it would be lawful to oppose whenever circumstances required it², prove that he was not likely favourably to impress his future master, Henry II. of England, in favour of the Sicilian monarch³, and we must look elsewhere for the origination of this scheme.

When the quarrels between Henry and Becket placed the English king in such a difficult position with reference to the holy see, he applied to the king, or rather to the regency of Sicily, which was on the best possible terms with the Pope, to interfere on his behalf, offering as a bribe the hand of his infant daughter Joanna for the young monarch. In spite of the advice of Walter del Molino to the contrary, his request was refused, or at least very partially complied with; and Becket, who addressed several letters to William and his mother, Queen Margaret⁴, and their ministers, on the subject, had influence enough to obtain their protection for such of his relations and friends as had taken refuge in Sicily from the persecutions of the English king⁵. The idea of the marriage was therefore dropped, and an alliance was actually formed for William with the daughter of Manuel Emperor of Constantinople, which was only broken by the fickle

¹ Testa, *Vita Gul.* II., pp. 182-3.

² Letters of Peter de Blois, No. 10.

³ Peter of Blois' *Epistles*, Nos. x., xlv., xc.

⁴ Becket's *Letters*, Nos. 56, 57, 58.

⁵ Alford, *Annal. Eccles.*, vol. iv., p. 135.

levity of the Greek monarch, who failed to send the bride-elect at the stipulated time¹. Frederic Barbarossa next offered him the hand of his daughter, but the orthodox prince refused to form any connection with the schismatic emperor², and finally reverted back, through the influence of his tutor Walter del Molino, whom he had recently raised to the Archbishopric of Palermo, to the consideration of the English marriage. Pope Alexander himself forwarded this alliance, from his desire to confirm William's union with the orthodox church, and completely to dis sever him from the cause of the antipope.

The death of Thomas-à-Becket, several years before, had put an end to the temporary coolness between the King of Sicily and Henry II. Indeed, an amicable correspondence existed between them, and a letter is yet extant, addressed by William to Henry, in answer to one he had received from the English monarch, sympathizing with him on the calamities in which he was involved by the undutiful behaviour of his sons³. This letter bears date 1173, the year subsequent to that in which William had freed himself from the shackles of a regency, and had entered upon the unrestrained exercise of his royal prerogatives⁴.

It was three years after this, that the ambassadors of King William the Good, Elias Bishop of Troye, Arnulph elect Bishop of Capua, and Count Florian de Camerota, the Justiciary of Sicily, with the Archbishop of Rouen, who, as a relation of William's, had joined them, arrived about Pentecost in London, where the king was then residing, formally to demand the hand of the Princess Joanna⁵.

¹ Romuald. Salern., p. 872. Testa, pp. 196-7.

² Testa, Arch. Monr., p. 199. Muratori, Annali d'Ital., vol. vii., p. 7.

³ Hoveden, p. 305 b. Diceto, Twysden, p. 1088.

⁴ Vita Gul. II., p. 196.

⁵ Hoveden, p. 315. Bened. Petrob., vol. i., p. 142. Rob. de Monte, p. 319. Bouquet, vol. xiii.

Henry immediately assembled a council of his prelates and nobles to deliberate upon these proposals. Their opinion was unanimous in favour of their acceptance, and it was accordingly signified to the ambassadors that their mission was likely to prove successful. Before, however, they entered into any obligations on the part of their master, they requested permission to see their future queen. The young sovereign seems to have made a stipulation with them, rather unusual in royal marriages, that they should not conclude the agreement unless the personal appearance of the bride-elect proved satisfactory. The Princess Joanna, then only in her twelfth year, was residing at Winchester, probably sharing the abode, though not the captivity, of her royal mother, who was at this time imprisoned, by order of the king, in the palace of Winchester¹. Thither the ambassadors repaired, with orders from King Henry that they were to be admitted to an interview with his daughter. The young princess was accordingly shown to them, and we are told that "when they looked upon her beauty, they were delighted beyond measure." They returned to court, and the arrangements on both sides were concluded². Part of the embassy remained in England, whilst the others, accompanied by the ambassadors of Henry, returned to Sicily to signify the consent of the English king to the union. William swore to perform all that had been promised on his behalf, and sent a letter to that effect to King Henry, by the returning ambassadors, who were accompanied by a deputation of noble Sicilians, dispatched to conduct the princess to Sicily³. In this epistle he expresses himself as much indebted to Henry for the gift of his daughter, whom he gratefully accepts, but begs to be excused swearing in person to comply with the demands of the English

¹ Bened. Petrob., ut supra.

² Diceto, Twysden, p. 590. Hoveden, ut supra.

³ Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. i., pt. i., p. 32.

ambassadors, since such was not the custom of the Sicilian monarchs, but promising to bind himself by the oaths of some of the noblest of the land¹.

Meanwhile preparations were busily making for the equipment of the Lady Joanna. Richard, Bishop of Winchester, with whom during her late residence in that city, she had been intimately associated, was ordered to provide everything in a style suitable to her rank. He attended to the equipment of her wardrobe, and also to the entertainment, at the king's expense, of the Sicilian embassy². A complete household was formed for her, and Earl Hameline Plantagenet, her father's natural brother, was appointed to be her principal escort³, along with the Archbishops of Rouen, Bourdeaux, Canterbury, and York, the Bishops of Ely, Norwich, and Nantes, and several other nobles and prelates. A court was held at Winchester in honour of her departure, when the princess took leave of her parents, and was formally surrendered by her father to the Archbishop of Capua, the chief of the ambassadors of her future husband, who all received from the king splendid presents of horses and vestments, with much gold and silver⁴.

On the 26th of August the same year, 1176, the whole party embarked in a small squadron of seven vessels, and set sail⁵. Every provision had been made by King Henry for his daughter's comfort during her long journey. He sent word to his eldest son, Prince Henry, then exercising a vice-regal authority in Normandy, to meet his sister on her arrival, and conduct her with due honours to Poictou, where she was to be received in like manner by her brother Richard, who was to escort her as far as St. Giles

¹ Diceto, Twysden, p. 594. See also Cotton MS., Julius C. II. fol. 100.

² Pipe Roll, 22 Henry II., Winton.

³ Bened. Petrob., vol. i., p. 147.

⁴ Ibid. Hoveden, p. 315. Diceto, p. 595.

⁵ Pipe Roll, 22 Henry II., Hampton.

in Toulouse, and there the galleys and servants of King William, were appointed to meet her. The Archbishop of York, and several other prelates, were commissioned not to leave her until they had witnessed the solemnization of the nuptials¹. These arrangements were duly fulfilled, and thus Joanna had an opportunity of bidding adieu to two of her brothers, from whom she was to be so long parted, and one of whom she never saw again.

On the 9th of November, the princess and her stately train, having traversed France, reached St. Giles, where the Bishop of Syracuse, and other noble Sicilians, with a fleet of twenty-five vessels, were awaiting her arrival². Here the Archbishop of Canterbury, and many of the English nobles, took leave of their young mistress, and returned by water to England, carrying with them two galleys loaded with rich gifts, sent by King William to his future father-in-law, but unfortunately these vessels were wrecked before they reached their destination, and all the treasures perished³.

The princess and her train were received with due honours on board the principal ship in the Sicilian fleet, and they immediately set sail; and after touching at Genoa, where they were treated with great respect by the Genoese, coasted along the shores of Italy, until they reached the city of Naples. During this tedious voyage of six weeks, Joanna, who had not been inured to the sea, suffered so severely from sickness, that it was found necessary to rest for a while, in order that she might recover her strength, and perhaps too her good looks, lest the flattering accounts sent of her beauty by the ambassadors, should appear to have been exaggerated. Accordingly she and her attendants celebrated the Christmas festival at Naples, and then travelled by land through Salerno and

¹ Diceto, p. 1113. Matt. Westm., Book ii., p. 53.

² Bened. Petrob., ut supra.

³ Diceto, Twysden, p. 1112.

Calabria, till they reached the Straits of Faro, which having crossed, they proceeded by land to Palermo, where they arrived on the 2nd of February, 1177¹. Here the most magnificent preparations had been made for the reception of the little lady. Her entry into Palermo, then the royal capital, and the most splendid city in Sicily, proudly called by William "the throne of his majesty"², was made late in the evening, and she was met on her approach by King William at the head of his nobles. The whole city was so splendidly illuminated, "that," says Hoveden, "you might almost think the city itself was on fire, and the beams of the stars could scarcely be seen amidst such a profusion of lights." The princess, decked out in her royal robes, which were of great splendour, and mounted on a white palfrey, entered the town, surrounded and followed by her train, and, amidst the most joyous acclamations of the admiring citizens, was conducted to a palace which had been superbly fitted up for her use, there to keep her state alone, until her marriage rendered it etiquette for her to share the residence of her plighted lord³. Inveges conjectures her abode to have been one of the Moorish palaces of Cuba or Zisa, both situated in the royal grounds in the midst of delicious gardens and fountains⁴.

The arrangements for her bridal were made without delay, and on the 13th of February, the nuptial ceremonies were performed by the Archbishop of Palermo. These consisted at this period in the mutual exchange of the plight ring between the bride and bridegroom; after which a veil was thrown over the head of the bride; they were then both crowned with flowers, and led in state to the home prepared for them⁵. After the celebration of

¹ Testa, *Vita Gul.* II., p. 247. Hoveden, p. 315.

² Phil. Cluverii *Sicilia Ant.*, Grævius, *Thes. Ant. Siciliæ*, vol. i.

³ Hoveden, p. 315. Ben. Petrob., vol. i, p. 199.

⁴ *Annales di Palermo*, vol. iii., p. 431.

⁵ Muratori, *Ant. Ital.*, vol. ii., p. 110. *Dissertatio Vigesima.*

her wedding, Joanna was crowned with regal solemnity the same day in the chapel royal, in presence of the Archbishop of York, and the other English ambassadors, and of the whole nobility of Sicily.

The ceremonies attending the coronation of a queen-consort of Sicily at this period, are minutely detailed by Inveges, as those which in all probability took place on this occasion. Two couches were prepared, on one of which sat the king attired in his regal robes, while the other was occupied by the archbishop, surrounded with his prelates—the queen meanwhile taking her station apart. The service commenced by the performance of the mass, and at the chanting of the Hallelujah, the king wearing his crown, with the sceptre in his hand, and the sword of state carried before him, advanced to the altar, and standing before the footstool of the archbishop, who sat mitred on his throne of state, he took off his crown and thus addressed him:—"We intreat, O reverend father, that you will deign to bless and adorn with the crown royal our consort united to us by God, to the praise and glory of our Saviour Jesus Christ." He then returned to his couch, and the queen, her hair loosely floating down her shoulders, and her head veiled, was conducted by two prelates to the archbishop, who still remained seated, and lowly kneeling before him, and kissing his hand, seemed silently to urge the petition. On this he rose, and still wearing his mitre, knelt on his footstool, while the queen at his left hand prostrated herself to the ground. A short litany was then said, after which the archbishop stood up, and uncovering himself, pronounced a prayer over the kneeling queen, and then sitting down anointed her with the holy oil, making the sign of the cross on the wrist and elbow of her right arm, and between her shoulders, saying, "God the Father," &c. She then withdrew to a pavilion, where she assumed the royal robes, after which she was reconducted to the archbishop, and again kneeling

before him, he placed the diadem on her head, saying, "Receive the crown of glory, that thou mayest know thyself to be the consort of a king;" and giving her the sceptre, said, "Receive the rod of virtue and equity, and be merciful and condescending to the poor." After this the bishops and her maids of honour led her back to her seat. When the offertory was finished, the king and queen came together to the altar, and presented as much gold as they thought proper, and at mass they both communicated¹.

On the conclusion of these ceremonies, Joanna was proclaimed throughout Palermo as Queen of Sicily².

The charter of King William, by which the dowry of his bride was settled, still exists, and is certainly a curious specimen of composition. The preamble consists of a long harangue on the blessings of the nuptial state, the ancientness of its institution, and its adaptation to the necessities of mankind—"induced by which considerations," it continues, "we, William, by divine clemency, King of Sicily, Duke of Apulia, and Prince of Capua, by the divine will, and under happy auspices, have united to ourselves in the holy law of matrimony, the royal maiden Joanna, the most illustrious daughter of Henry, the magnificent King of England, that she may exhibit the chaste love and fidelity of happy wedlock. From which marriage we trust that God will grant us a royal progeny which, illustrious by their virtues as well as their descent, may at length be elevated to the highest dignities of the kingdom. And because it is worthy of our lofty rank that so noble and glorious a spouse should be honoured with a sufficient dowry, we hereby give and concede," &c. The dowry thus formally introduced, was very ample. It consisted of the whole county of St. Angelo, the cities

¹ Inveges, *Annal. Palerm.*, vol. iii., pp. 432-3.

² Hoveden, p. 315. Bened. Petrob., vol. i., p. 200. Romuald. Salern., p. 880. Diceto, Twysden, p. 596.

of Liponti and Viesta, with many important castles and towns, the whole revenues of which were to be bestowed upon the youthful bride. This deed was given under the hand of Walter, Archbishop of Palermo, and signed by all the officers of state, nine in number, the English ambassadors, five archbishops, ten bishops, and five earls, with many inferior nobles of Sicily, who all attended to add splendour to these royal nuptials¹. After the document had been thus duly signed and attested, an authentic copy of it was taken to be sent to King Henry II.; and the ambassadors of England, having seen their royal lady thus settled, took their leave and departed homewards². One part of Joanna's dowry is not mentioned in this charter, namely, a chair of state, made of solid gold, which was given to her by her husband, after the custom we are told of Sicilian queens³.

At the period of her marriage, Joanna had not completed her twelfth year, while her spouse was in his twenty-fourth. The portrait of King William, engraved in Testa's memoirs of him, represents him as an exceedingly beautiful youth, with features of exquisite symmetry, beardless, but with long curling hair, and a complexion whose feminine delicacy ill agrees with the armour in which he is completely encased. Over his coat of mail he wears a loose robe, clasped on the left shoulder with a fibula. The testimony borne by the ancient historians to his mental accomplishments is equally favourable with this delineation of his person. He is said to have possessed a capacious intellect, a lively disposition, and refined tastes, while his profuse liberality to the church, as well as to the poor, and the impartial justice of his administration, secured for him the title, by which he is placed in such forcible contrast to his father, of William the Good⁴.

¹ Hoveden, pp. 315, 315 b. Rymer, vol. i., pt. i., p. 35.

² Brompton, p. 1183.

³ Ibid., col. 1183.

⁴ Testa, p. 302, et seq. Aprile, Cron. della Sicilia, pp. 97, 689.

The palace of Palermo, to which the young bride was led on her marriage-day, was a magnificent structure commenced by the Saracens on the site of the ancient palace, and greatly enlarged by King Roger, a monarch remarkable for his fine taste in architecture, who added to it bastions and towers, and rendered it both stronger and more spacious. He also erected the central tower, probably containing the state apartments, which was called the Joaria or Giojaria, from the profusion of gems with which the interior was decorated. William I. added a fresh suite of apartments, said to surpass all the rest in the beauty of their workmanship; but he did not live to finish them, and therefore the completion was left to his son William II¹. Probably these beautiful rooms, fitted up as they were under his own eye, would be those occupied by the young monarch and his bride.

Joanna was not the only royal lady then dwelling in this mansion. The queen-mother, Margaret, though she had some time since relinquished all active share in the government, still continued to reside with her son, by whom she was ever treated with great respect². Joanna had another companion, too, more suitable in point of age, in the Lady Constanza, posthumous daughter of King Roger, who was born in the year 1154, and consequently only eleven years older than the young queen.

King William and Queen Joanna, however, often courted the retirement of rural life. The king was fond of country sports, particularly of hunting, and in order to indulge in his favourite amusement, he frequently resorted to his extensive hunting-grounds, called the old park, at Monreale, about four miles west of Palermo. These were most romantically situated among groves and mountains, abounding with fountains of the purest water. On the

¹ Testa, pp. 200-1. Chron. Sicil., Grævius, vol. v., col. 5. Mongitore, *Dissertazione dell' Antiche Glorie di Palermo*, p. 159.

² Testa, p. 275.

side of one of the hills, accessible by a gently-winding ascent, stood a splendid villa, erected by the good taste of his ancestors, and to this retired residence William and his youthful companion often withdrew. From it they commanded the most extensive prospect over the park and pleasure-grounds, and the luxuriant campagna, with the city of Palermo in the distance, while beyond, the dark waters of the Adriatic blended with the horizon¹.

Thus beneath the "glorious blue" of the Sicilian sky, surrounded with all that they could desire, and happy in each other, we may presume that in this terrestrial paradise the King and Queen of Sicily enjoyed more of happiness than usually falls to the lot of mortality. Although they lived principally in Palermo, which, from its delightful situation and elegance of architecture, was called by William "Panormus felix," or Palermo the happy², yet they occasionally visited Messina, Capua, and the other principal cities of their dominions, receiving wherever they travelled over their fertile domains, the enthusiastic homage of a grateful and admiring people³.

The condition of Sicily was at this period extremely prosperous. The great fertility of its soil, combined with the agricultural industry of its inhabitants, freed from the burdens of foreign warfare, rendered the royal revenues so ample, that not only could all the expenses of government be abundantly provided for, but immense sums were still left at the disposal of the sovereign. Without coinciding in the assertion of Brompton, that the revenues derived from the city of Palermo alone were greater than those of all England, yet, if we are to credit the magnificent details which occasionally reach us of the equipments and furniture of Sicilian royalty, we must admit that they far surpassed all bounds of moderate calculation. The gorgeous silken

¹ Testa, Arch. Monr., pp. 66-7.

² Mongitore, Dissert. di Palermo, p. 151.

³ Chron. Mon. Casin., Carusius, vol. i., p. 512.

robes, first woven in Palermo, the massive gold and silver plate, the peerless gems, together with the immense heaps of money frequently alluded to, excite the most dazzling conceptions of the wealth and luxury of the monarchy¹.

Literature, too, was extensively cultivated, and in the society of the Archbishop of Palermo, Ronald, Archbishop of Salerno, whose historical chronicles give us a high idea of his abilities, and the other learned men who frequented her husband's court, Queen Joanna would find ample opportunities for increasing her own stock of learning. Probably Archbishop Walter, who was at this time at the head of affairs at Sicily, occasionally resumed, for the benefit of his young mistress, his long-forsaken occupation of tutor.

In the year 1181, Joanna, then only in her seventeenth year, presented her lord with a son and heir. William, whose imagination dwelt with chivalric enthusiasm on anything connected with what was long his favourite project of rescuing the Holy Land from the hands of the infidel, gave the boy the name of Boemond, after his noble relative Boemond, Prince of Tarentum, and afterwards of Antioch, one of the most redoubted heroes of the first crusade. As soon as the infant was baptized, his proud father conferred upon him the dukedom of Apulia, the investiture of which was given, according to the usual custom in those days, by a touch of the golden sceptre². But the little prince did not long enjoy either his present or prospective honours, for he died when he was only a

¹ Twysden, col. 1011.

² Rob. de Monte, Append. ad Sigebert. Gemblac., 'Pistorius, vol. i., p. 932. That this was the ordinary mode of conveying investitures, both lay and clerical, is proved by several allusions to it which occur in ancient charters. Thus, in the charter of the elevation of Castruccio to the dukedom of Lucca by the Emperor Louis of Bavaria, the following passage is found:—"We do now, at this present, invest and enfeoff you of the fore-named dukedom and office of standard-bearer, by the sceptre which we hold in our hand."—Scripta Publica Lud. Bav. Imp., Freher, Rer. Germ. Script. Ant., vol. i., p. 658.

few weeks old, and during the remaining years of their wedded life William and Joanna never had another child¹.

About this time, or a little before, King William commenced an erection which still survives in proud though diminished majesty to testify the greatness and munificence of its founder. This was the abbey of Monreale. It would be most unsuitable that in that age of wonders the establishment of such an institution should be without its legend of marvel, which is as follows.

One day when William was hunting in his favourite park of Monreale, feeling weary with heat and exercise, he alighted from his horse, and throwing himself down on the green sward, under the shade of a wide-spreading tree, was soon lost in a profound slumber. Here "the blessed Virgin, the holy mother of God, appeared to him, refulgent with celestial beauty," and exhorted him ever to continue in the course of piety he had so well begun, and to crown his good deeds by the erection of a magnificent temple, to be dedicated to her honour, on the very ground where she now appeared; and to assist him in the undertaking, she was kind enough to point out a spot where part of the immense treasures accumulated and hidden by his father were deposited²;—for William I., who was remarkable for his money-loving propensities, had buried gold and silver to an almost incredible amount, and died without communicating the secret of its concealment. When the king awoke, he searched for and found the treasures in the specified place, and forthwith commenced his building, which, in compliance with the commands of his celestial visitant, was founded within the park of Monreale;—William, we are told, being glad to deprive himself of this private retreat in honour of the Virgin³.

¹ Rob. de Monte, *ut supra*.

² Testa, *Arch. Monr.*, pp. 207-8.

³ Testa, *Arch. Monr.*, p. 208. *Chron. Sic.*, Martène, *Thes. Anec.*, vol. iii., col. 10. Michel del Guidice, *Descrizione del real Tempio di Monreale*, pt. i., p. 46. Fazello, *Historia di Sicilia*, p. 443.

The description of this building by the Archbishop Testa, late its presiding occupant, conveys the most exalted ideas of its splendour. He tells us it was very extensive. The columns were partly of Egyptian granite, and partly of porphyry. The interior walls were of Parian marble, while the floor was inlaid with Mosaics, representing in coloured marbles and precious stones several scenes from sacred history, wrought with the most elaborate skill by the Greek artisans who were employed by the king. One picture represented the coronation of King William¹, another depicted him as being crowned by our Saviour, who stands behind him, with the motto, "My hand shall uphold him," whilst in a third he is kneeling, and presenting to the Virgin a model of the abbey of Monreale. In another compartment of this Mosaic pavement Queen Joanna, true to the recollection of her early friend, Thomas-à-Becket, caused his portrait to be executed in his archiepiscopal robes, at her own private expense, and she frequently visited this memento of him with an affectionate reverence which became actual worship upon his subsequent canonization². In the obtaining of this canonization she was warmly interested, and her husband, sympathizing in her wishes, joined with her in writing a letter to Pope Clement VII. on the subject, in which, styling themselves "the king of Sicily and the queen, daughter of King Henry," they strongly urge upon his holiness the granting of a petition presented by Henry II. on the subject³.

The extent and magnificence of the abbey of Monreale rendered it the object of surprised admiration to future ages, especially when regarded as the work, not of a long series of monarchs, but of one alone⁴. It is said that upon

¹ Vita Gul. II., p. 209. Francis Maurolyc., Grævius, Thes. Ant. Sic., vol. iv., col. 158.

² Giudice, Monreale, pt. i., p. 156, and table xviii. Luigi Lello, plate xvi., No. 20, and p. 106.

³ The Harleian MS., 788, fol. 94 b., contains a copy of this letter, which has not been printed.

⁴ When the Emperor Charles V. visited Sicily, he is said to have

its completion. William was extremely anxious that it should be consecrated by the Pope, and that he therefore undertook a journey to Rome, to hold a colloquy with the holy father, and having induced him to come on board his own galley, ordered the men to weigh anchor and hoist their canvass, and by this stratagem sailed off with him in triumph to Palermo¹. Without vouching for the accuracy of this statement respecting the mode of his voyage, it is certain that in 1182, Pope Lucius III. did visit Sicily, for the special purpose of making Monreale an archbishopric, and expressed in the warmest terms his admiration of the structure, which he said was such as "no king had ever before constructed".

The benefactions bestowed on this church by the king and queen were most liberal. Every year, on the festival of the Virgin Mary, they visited it, and William made some valuable offering on the altar; while Margaret, the queen-mother, was not behind hand in her gifts, and at her request the bodies of her husband, King William I. and her eldest son Roger, were conveyed from the royal chapel of Palermo³, and reinterred there.

The king had, however, to make one sacrifice to his new establishment, which he does not appear at first to have calculated upon. The erection of the monastery rendered Monreale so famous, that it speedily became a populous

been greatly struck with it. "So" said he, "King William alone was able to erect this magnificent church. Ah," he added, with a sigh, "but then he had not my wars to encounter."—Aprile, *Cronologia della Sicilia*, p. 99.

¹ Fransiscus Baronius, Grævius, vol. xiii., p. 152.

² Lo Taso *Duomo di Monreale*, p. 1. This magnificent work, published in large folio, contains a fine collection of drawings and plans relating to Monreale.

³ Testa, p. 216. Rocchus Pirrus, *Notitiæ Regiæ Capellæ Panorm.*, p. 6. A large number of charters and other deeds of gifts presented by King William and his mother to Monreale are to be found in Mongitore, *Descrizione del real Tempio di Monreale* and *Notizie del stato Antico di Monreale*.

village, and from a village was likely soon to increase to a flourishing town. Thus the quiet seclusion of his royal retreat was woefully broken in upon, and William in consequence, after reserving to himself a small house near, to serve for his convenience and that of the queen on their visits to the abbey¹, relinquished the whole of the ground to the hundred Benedictine monks, whom he had established as the inhabitants of the monastery, and selected another spot, three miles distant from Monreale, and seven from Palermo, where he enclosed the "new park," and built another summer residence, not inferior to the former in magnificence, which from its situation commanded a view of the sea from the west, as well as from the north, and which supplied to him and his young queen the place of the one they had lost².

But his park, his monastery, and even his beautiful wife, did not engross the exclusive attention of William the Good. Notwithstanding his love for rural retirement, he never forgot that he was a sovereign, and as such had important duties to perform. The comparative freedom from external commotion afforded him an opportunity of attending to the internal regulations of his kingdom. He established the courts of judicature on an entirely new foundation, and drew up, with the assistance of his counsellors, a new code of laws. In this work he was materially assisted by the discovery of a copy of the Roman laws, probably the celebrated Justinian code, from which he supplied the deficiencies in those which had been ordained by his Norman ancestors³. He was very strict in his enactments against usury, and he visited with severe punishment those Saracen prowlers, who, disguised as Christians, still haunted Sicily, and sometimes made prey

¹ Guidice, Tempio di Monreale, p. 88.

² Testa, p. 287.

³ Placidi Rey. Not. Hist. Messanæ, Grævius, vol. ix., p. 179. Testa, pp. 256-7.

of helpless women and children, on whom they inflicted the most dreadful tortures¹.

The close vicinity of Sicily to the coast of Africa, and the powerful hold possessed by the Saracens on that island, previous to their expulsion by the strong arm of the brave Robert Guiscard and his comrades, rendered it more than usually liable to the attacks of these infidel hordes. But the admirable state of equipment in which William II. held his fleet as well as his land forces, and the respect caused by his vigorous administration, had prevented any serious attack being made during his reign. He always kept powerful squadrons of ships cruising round the island, by means of which the Sicilian seas were completely cleared of the pirates, who had so long infested them². On one occasion a daughter of Joseph, the Emperor of Morocco, on her way to the Saracen prince to whom she was plighted in marriage, fell into the hands of the Sicilian cruisers, and was taken captive. With such a prize in his power, William was able to dictate terms to her father, and he availed himself of his good fortune to obtain a treaty very advantageous to the interests of his kingdom³.

Shortly after this, in the year 1183, the young Prince Henry of England, brother to Joanna, died. His death was almost immediately followed by that of the queen-mother, Margaret of Navarre, which took place in the royal palace of Palermo. She was sincerely loved and honoured by her son, who caused her to be splendidly interred at Monreale, and erected a handsome monument of marble to her memory, near the tombs of those of her family who were already buried there⁴.

These domestic calamities were followed by one of a

¹ Testa, p. 253.

² Aprile, p. 99. Guillaume de Nangis, Bouquet, vol. xx., p. 744.

³ Testa, pp. 258-9.

⁴ Ibid., p. 275. Chron. Sic., Martène, Thes. Anecd., vol. iii. col. 10.

more public nature. A terrible earthquake took place this year in Calabria, which extended over Sicily, and in its disastrous effects occasioned extensive ruin and desolation throughout the island. It afforded opportunity for the king and queen to exercise their generosity towards the suffering inhabitants, many of whom were completely ruined by this catastrophe¹.

Some years had now elapsed since the marriage of William and Joanna, and after the premature death of the infant Boemond, no prospect had appeared of the birth of an heir to the crown; Prince Henry, William's younger brother, had died young; and the king, anxious to avoid the evils of a disputed succession, assembled the states of Sicily, and caused the nobles to swear fealty and perform homage to the Lady Costanza, his aunt, the sole surviving legitimate issue of King Roger I., as presumptive-heiress to the throne. Occupying such an important position, the hand of Costanza, who besides her rich inheritance, had the advantage of being very beautiful, was eagerly sought by several European princes. The successful candidate was Henry, eldest son of the Emperor Frederic Barbarossa.

The Sicilian heiress was conducted with great pomp to Reale; there she was met by Henry, who escorted her to Lombardy, where their marriage was solemnized²; and King William, assembling the nobles, made them swear to receive Henry, the husband of his aunt, as his heir³. The equipments provided for her by her nephew were on the most ample scale, for one hundred and fifty horses laden with gold, silver, and gems, and precious furniture pertaining to the apartments of royal females, were sent in her train.

The most mistaken statements with reference to this princess were afterwards set afloat by those historians who

¹ Testa, p. 275.

² Testa, pp. 290-4. Chron. Casin. Anon., Muratori, p. 513. Bened. Petrob., vol. ii., p. 580.

³ Chron. Andr. Mon., Acher Spicilegium, vol. ii., p. 821.

countenanced the claims of her future rival Tancred, to the throne of Sicily. They assert that she was taken from the cloister after the death of William II., in order to afford a pretext for the ambitious claims of Henry of Germany, by his marriage with her, whereas the contemporary historians distinctly inform us that she resided in the palace of her brother and nephew the kings of Sicily, from whence she was married, during the reign and with the sanction of William, in 1186¹. By the former she is represented as an old woman of sixty, and the birth of her son, afterwards the Emperor Frederic II., in 1194², is declared to be either a miracle or an imposture³. But the fact that she was the *posthumous* daughter of King Roger, fixes her birth indubitably in 1154, the year of his death⁴, so that at the period of her marriage she was only thirty-one, and when she became a mother, had just completed her thirty-sixth year. It should be remembered too, that, although she was declared heiress-presumptive of Sicily, yet as King William was then only thirty-one, being born in the same year as his aunt, and his consort had not yet attained her twenty-first year, it was far from improbable that her rights might be ultimately superseded.

A warm attachment subsisted between the Lady Costanza and her niece the Sicilian queen, and her departure was cause of regret to Joanna. She felt her loneliness the more, from the circumstance that her lord was much engaged in concerting expeditions, first against the Greek Emperor, led by himself in person, and which proved very successful⁵, and then against the Infidels.

The recent capture of Jerusalem by the famous Sultan

¹ Testa, p. 290.

² Muratori, *Annali d'Italia*, vol. vii., pp. 51, 86.

³ Nicolaus Specialis, *Marca Hispanica*, cols. 729, 730.

⁴ *Chron. Sic.*, Grævius, vol. v., col. 5. Otto St. Blasius, Urstisius, p. 211. Testa, p. 21.

⁵ Testa, pp. 277, et seq. *Chron. Anon. Mont. Casinensis*, Carusius, vol. i., p. 513. Diceto, Twysden, p. 628. Guillaume de Nangis, Bouquet, vol. xx., p. 741.

Saladin, after it had been for so many years in the hands of the Christians, excited a deep sensation throughout the whole Catholic world. So strong were the emotions of King William the Good, that when he first heard the tidings, he put on a garment of sackcloth, and for four days hid himself altogether from the face of men, not even admitting the queen into his presence¹. Bitterly did he now reproach himself for not having made more vigorous exertions against the Infidels; but he was waiting for some general movement among the princes of Europe, without whose co-operation the armies of Sicily could scarcely hope to produce any permanent impression, where warfare was waged on so extensive a scale.

Immediately on the receipt of the disastrous intelligence, he dispatched a squadron of ships, conveying the most prompt succour to the distressed Christians², and made preparations to enter personally, even though it were single-handed, into the conflict. The efforts of this armament were eminently successful; and encouraged by the animated details which they gave on their return, William collected together a large fleet of five hundred vessels well armed and stored, with which he set sail for Tripoli³.

The battle-standard carried before him in this and his after warlike expeditions, bore, instead of the usual heraldic blazonry, a simple cross, on which were inscribed his titles, "William, by the clemency of God, King of Sicily, Duke of Apulia, and Prince of Capua," with his motto, "Dextera Domini fecit virtutem. Dextera Domini exaltavit me." "The right hand of God has given courage. The right hand of God has exalted me⁴." The Sicilian monarchs owed this emblem to an ingenious ruse of King Roger the First. When his troops were nearly overcome

¹ Peter of Blois, Letter quoted in Bened. Petrob., vol. ii., p. 477.

² Buonfiglio, p. 246. Aprile, p. 693.

³ Vitâ Gul. II., p. 297.

⁴ Hoveden, p. 316.

in a battle with the Saracens, he suddenly called out that he saw a knight riding on a steed of dazzling whiteness, and bearing on his shield a red cross, who was fighting for them. The report spread like wild-fire among the ranks; a brilliant cross was said to glitter on the standard of the army, and a decisive victory was the result of the enthusiasm thus excited in the minds of the soldiers. After this circumstance, the cross and its accompanying motto, were adopted as the ensigns of Sicilian royalty.

We are not informed whether Queen Joanna accompanied her husband in this expedition, but as they were seldom parted, and as she herself was not destitute of crusading enthusiasm, the probabilities seem to be that she did so. They had scarcely landed, however, when intelligence reached them that King Richard, who had just succeeded his father on the English throne, and King Philip of France, both of whom had recently assumed the cross, were on their way to Messina. Upon this, William determined to return, in order that he might concert measures in unison with them.

Accordingly the fleet set sail for Palermo, where he made the most active preparations for the reception of his illustrious visitors, and was just about to start for Messina to meet and welcome them, when he was seized with a sudden attack of fever, which in a few days brought him to the grave. He died in his own palace at Palermo, on the 18th of November, 1189, in the thirty-sixth year of his age, and twenty-fourth of his reign².

Universal was the grief in Sicily on the death of this amiable and beloved monarch. His corpse was first laid in state in the cathedral of Palermo, whither it was attended by the tears and lamentations of the people, and

¹ A drawing of this cross is given in Hoveden, p. 316.

² Chron. Sic., ut supra. Testa, p. 298. Burigny, Hist. de Sicile, vol. i., p. 501. Chron. Fosca. Nova, Muratori, vol. vii., col. 877. Rich. St. Germ., Ibid., col. 970. Tartinus, Rer. Ital. Script., vol. i., p. 68.

then deposited, according to his own wish, in the church of Monreale, near the tomb of his father, King William I., where an anniversary service has ever since been performed for him¹. The confusions that arose subsequent to his decease, prevented the erection of any more worthy monument than a plain mural tablet to the memory of the founder of that magnificent structure, till in 1578, Ludovico di Torres, then Archbishop of Monreale, had a beautiful tomb constructed for him at his own expense, into which his remains were, with great ceremony, conveyed. On an inspection of the corpse, the light flowing locks were still remaining in all their former luxuriance². The sword which had been buried with him was presented to the Duke of Alva, who was then Viceroy of Sicily, by whom it was forwarded to Philip II. of Spain; —“an unworthy act,” says Chiaranda, “for no king living or dead should ever be without a sword³.”

The testimony of all historians is unanimous as to the fine person, commanding abilities, generous disposition, and amiable temper of William the Good, and the praises bestowed upon his conjugal fidelity and affection, augur well for the domestic happiness of his young and beautiful consort. Even the want of offspring, which must naturally have been a source of regret to him, and which would have induced half the monarchs of Europe to break their marriage-vows, only led to additional marks of tenderness on the part of King William; for he consoled his spouse by the assurances that his love would never suffer diminution, from a circumstance which was her misfortune and not her fault⁴.

William was a liberal patron of literature and the fine arts; and during his reign the cathedral of Palermo,

¹ Testa, Arch. Monr., ut supra. Aprile, p. 97.

² Testa, p. 299.

³ De Vitâ et Rebus Gestis Gul. II., p. 299. J. P. Chiaranda, Piazza città di Sicilia, p. 123.

⁴ Rich. St. Germ., Carusius, vol. v., p. 546.

erected under the auspices of his friend and tutor, Archbishop Walter, was completed and consecrated¹; and many other improvements were effected in this already magnificent capital.

It is singular that the coins of this accomplished prince should exhibit a roughness in the design, and a want of finish in the execution, which strongly contrast with the elegance of those of his successors, Tancred and Henry; and they are even less tasteful than those of his father, William the Bad,—a coarse architectural sketch, or an Arabic inscription being generally the only ornaments. On one only is he himself depicted, when he was a mere boy; and certainly this representation most woefully belies the universal testimony of historians as to his remarkable and early-developed beauty².

Much of his prosperity may be attributed to the excellent terms on which he always lived with the popes, who were more than once indebted to him for assistance, both in arms and money, during their frequent quarrels with the Emperor Frederic Barbarossa. In his death, the war of the cross lost one of its most gallant and hopeful champions, for his heart was fully in the cause, and the situation of his dominions so near the theatre of action, together with their extreme fertility, gave him ample facilities for supplying food for the Christian armies.

His reign was called by the Sicilians the golden age; and was looked back upon with the more fondness, from the miseries they endured under his successors.

¹ Aprile, *Cron. della Sicilia*, p. 690.

² Grævius, *Ant. Sic.*, vol. viii., table. The seventh and eighth volumes of this valuable work contain engravings of the coins of all the Sicilian kings.

JOANNA,

THIRD DAUGHTER OF HENRY II.—*Continued.*

CHAPTER IX.

Joanna's position—Tancred usurps the crown—Imprisons the queen—She sends messengers to King Richard—His indignation—Lands at Messina—Demands her from Tancred—She arrives at Messina—Visited by Philip of France—Her retaliations upon Tancred—Sells her dowry lands to Tancred—Winter at Messina—Arrival of Queen Eleanora and Berengaria—Capture of Emperor Isaac—Joanna sails for Syria—Received by King Philip—Resides in camp—Famine—Acres taken—Queens in royal palace—Joanna wooed by Saladin's brother—Refuses him—Resides at Acre a year—Returns to Europe—Visits Sicily and Rome—Escorted to Poitou by Raimond of Toulouse—His former wives—Contests for Toulouse—Marriage of Joanna and Raimond—She retains title of queen—Her neglect of the church—Birth of her son—Heads troops against her husband's rebels—Betrayed—Applies for aid to Richard—Easter at Mans—Second visit to Rouen—Grief for Richard's death—Poverty—Long illness—Attended by her mother—Death scene—Buried at Fontevraud—Effigies—Attachment of her maids—Prayers for her soul—Her will—Future life of Earl Raimond—His contests with the Pope—Attachment to Albigenes—His death—Raimond VII.

By the death of her husband, Joanna was left a widow at the age of twenty-four, without any other support or protection in the Sicilian court, amidst the tumults which immediately ensued, than that which her own character and station procured for her. Though King William had died without a will, yet the formal homage he had caused to be paid to his aunt, the Lady Costanza, as his heiress, in

case he died without children, sufficiently declared his wishes as to the disposition of his dominions¹.

A formidable rival, however, to her claim, appeared in the person of Tancred, an illegitimate grandson of King Roger, by his eldest son Roger, who having died without leaving any lawful issue, Tancred was now the only male descendant of that monarch². The absence of Costanza and her husband, the unwillingness of the Sicilians to submit to the German yoke, and still more the countenance afforded by the Pope to his pretensions, enabled the bold usurper to succeed in his design of placing the diadem of Sicily on his own brows. But the party of Costanza was still dangerous; at the head of it was Walter, the Archbishop of Palermo; and it was, in all probability, espoused by Queen Joanna, whose attachment to her aunt has already been alluded to. This supposition is necessary to account for the almost unprecedented step taken by King Tancred, that of throwing the queen-dowager into prison. Such a procedure at first sight seemed exceedingly impolitic, as it was sure to bring down upon him the displeasure of the King of England, whose fleet, as we have seen, was speedily expected, and would also exasperate against him the Sicilians, who adored the memory of their late sovereign. But this spirited princess was considered by the king too dangerous an opponent to be allowed to remain at liberty. Joanna was therefore confined, a helpless captive, in the city, and perhaps in the very palace, where she had so long presided with regal splendour³. For some months her situation was desolate enough. No tidings arrived of the landing of King Richard; it was very possible that, being precluded from any hope of co-operation with King

¹ Rochus Pirrus, Grævius, vol. v., p. 36. Franc. Maurolyc. Sican. Hist., Grævius, vol. iv., col. 157. Thes. Anecd., vol. iii., col. 73. Aprile, p. 692.

² Aprile, p. 100.

³ Vinisauf, Gale, vol. iii., p. 306.

William by the death of that monarch, he might have passed on to the Holy Land, without calling at Sicily. There appeared no likelihood of any successful attempt to shake the now established power of the tyrant; and the heart of the young queen must have sunk within her, as she looked forward to the probability of spending long years in hopeless captivity.

But after an imprisonment of nearly a year, the hour of her deliverance at length drew near. In the beginning of the autumn of 1190 the news reached Sicily that Richard, King of England, was then at Marseilles with his troops, about to proceed to the Holy Land, and Joanna contrived means to send a messenger to her gallant brother with intelligence of her situation. The scene in which King Richard received the tidings is thus described by Piers de Langtoft¹:—

Hasty fro Sicile
 Come him a messengere,
 Fro the queene dame Jone,
 His awn sister dere;
 Bifor them everilk one
 He told kyng Richere
 “Dede is kyng William,
 That regned in Sicile;
 That Jone the lady nam, (*took*)
 He lyved bot a while.
 That erle of Tancrede,—
 I trow a doughty knyght,
 And valiant man of dede,
 And to the crown has ryght,—
 He reynes after him
 That late had the crowne;
 To Jone he is *fulle grim*,
 And holdes her in prisonne.”
 Herfore kyng Richard
 Wrathes him and says,
 “Dight us thiderward
 Our vessels and galais,
 My syster I will out wyn
 Ere I ferther go.

¹ Vol. ii., p. 149. The author regrets the necessity of somewhat modernizing the orthography of Langtoft, to render it comprehensible to general readers.

Bot (*unless*) he wyl higyn (*obey*)
 Sicile he sal turne fro,
 And bot he wille wyth pece
 Accorde in reson,
 It sall reue him that res (*thing*)
 That he to Jone has done."
 The date was a thousand
 A hundreth and ninetie
 That Richard was sailand
 Toward Painie (*pagan land*).

Cœur-de-Lion was not wont to threaten in vain. On the 23rd of September, after a few days' unavoidable detention at Rome, he landed at Messina, intent on avenging his sister's wrongs. His arrival is thus eloquently described by his fellow-crusader Vinisauf:—"When Richard was about to land, the people rushed down in crowds towards the beach, when behold from a distance the sea seemed cleft with innumerable oars, the loud voices of the trumpets and horns sounded clear and shrill. On nearer approach, you might see the galleys rowing in order, adorned with various armour, with innumerable pennons and banners floating on the top of the spears; the beaks of the vessels were painted with the various devices of the knights they bore, and glittering with the rays reflected from the shields. You might see the sea boil with the multitude of the oars, while the air trembled with the clang of trumpets and the tumultuous shouts of the delighted crowds. The magnificent king, girded with an obsequious train, himself loftier and more splendid than them all, stood erect on the prow, like one expecting alike to see and to be seen. He descended on to the shore, surrounded by dense crowds, who admired the splendour of his appearance. There the sailors and those who had been sent before stood ready to receive him properly, and present to him his gallant steeds. The natives mixed up with his people, and followed him to his hotel; the trumpets everywhere ringing out, fitly blending their shrill accents, and producing discordant and yet harmonious sounds, while the

people whispered together, 'He is indeed worthy of empire; he is rightly made king over people and kingdoms; what we heard of him at a distance falls far short of what we see¹.'" The enthusiasm of the Grifons, as the inhabitants of Messina were called, was the greater, because the landing of King Philip shortly before had been conducted in a private manner, on which the disappointed multitude vented their spite by dubbing him as an arrant coward.

Upon his arrival the English king forthwith sent messengers to Tancred, demanding the instant restoration of his sister². We quote from Piers de Langtoft:—

Thre days in that citie
 Dwelled kyng Richard.
 To the kyng of Tancred³
 He sent his letter hard,
 To deliver his sister Jone
 Out of his prison.
 Men mad to him grete moan,
 It was without reson.
 "Bot (*unless*) he deliver hir me
 With love, at my prayere,
 That time sal he see
 She sal be bouht fulle deere."
 This kyng of Tancrede
 He was a wise knyght,
 He saw it was to drede
 An he did not alle right,
 He saw Richard an ired
 And his mykelle myght,
 His folk armed and tired (*attired*)
 And ay ready to fight.
 He sent his sister Jone
 Wyth mykelle honeste,
 Wyth his barons ilkone
 To Mesina that citie.

The whole of the magnificent equipage of the dowager-queen was restored to her, along with her household furni-

¹ Vinisau, Gale, vol. ii., p. 307-8.

² Hoveden, p. 383 b. Langtoft, vol. i., p. 150.

³ The translator of Piers de Langtoft is somewhat confused here; he seems to think of Tancred as a title of dominion, rather than a name, for he always styles him King or Erle of Tancrede.

ture, and she was also put in possession of her forfeited dower lands. After these steps had been taken to propitiate her warlike brother, the queen and her train, with the returning ambassadors of Richard, were sent by water, in the galleys of King Tancred, from Palermo to Messina, where they arrived on the 28th day of September, 1190. On her landing Joanna was met and welcomed by King Richard¹. Fourteen years had elapsed since the brother and sister last parted, and great alteration had taken place in both. The little bride of eleven had now grown up into a graceful and dignified woman; while the headstrong and reckless Earl of Poictou, not a whit less reckless than before, had become burdened with the weighty cares of royalty, though in truth the crown never sat very heavily upon the helmeted brow of Richard Cœur-de-Lion.

The hospital of St. John's at Messina had been fitted up for the use of the dowager-queen, and thither she was accordingly conducted. The following day she was visited not only by her brother, but by Philip Augustus, King of France, whose forces had joined those of King Richard. The monarch was delighted with her beauty, "and left her," we are told, "with so pleasant a face, that the people said the King of France would wed her²." But the Sicilian gossips, like most others of the clan, said more than they had good authority for about the "curtise Philip," for it does not appear that the idea of marriage with the fair dowager ever entered his head, or if it did, the jealousies between him and her brother speedily drove it out again.

The time had now arrived when the Princess Joanna had it in her power to make reprisals for the injuries she had recently received, and she did not fail to do so. No real

¹ Bened. Petrob., vol. ii., p. 605. Hoveden, ut supra. Chron. Rich. Devizes, f. 73, Cotton. MS., Domitian, XIII.

² Bened. Petrob., ut supra. Hoveden, ut supra. Chron. Anon., Cotton. M.S., Claudius, B. vii. fol., 129, col. i.

ground of quarrel seems to have subsisted between Tancred and King Richard, whose demands had been at once complied with, and therefore it is but natural to conclude that the unceremonious conduct of the king was the result of the influence of his offended sister.

Three days after her arrival Richard took forcible possession of a strongly-fortified monastery called la Baignare, beyond the straits of Faro, "where canons regular serve God perpetually day and night," and the following day he led his sister to this stronghold, which he assigned as her residence; and leaving her to the care of the monks, with abundance of servants to wait upon her and soldiers to guard her, he returned to Messina¹. Several other fortresses shared the same fate, and at length the jealousy of the Messenians was so completely roused by this strange conduct of their guest, that during Richard's absence they rushed upon the English troops and expelled them from the town.

This insult was not to be borne²; a furious attack, headed by the king himself, soon put him in forcible possession of the city, and the banner of England proudly floated from the ramparts of Messina.

But the mischievous Joanna was not yet satisfied. She next incited her brother to ask from Tancred certain legacies which she pretended her late husband, King William, had left him in his will. Now it was well

¹ Brompton, p. 1180. Twysden, Hoveden, p. 383 b. Ben. Petrob., vol. ii., p. 606. Vinisau, Gale, vol. ii., p. 310.

² A graphic account is preserved by a contemporaneous chronicler of the wrath of Cœur de Lion on this defeat. "The King of England roared horribly like the fiercest lion, and was so greatly disturbed, that his dearest friends durst not approach him. A council of chiefs was held, but none durst lift up their eyes to his face. After a long silence, he himself began his speech. "O, my soldiers, the strength and crown of my kingdom," &c. He went on with exhortations to bravery, declaring that every foot soldier who dared to fly should lose one of his feet, and any knight, his belt of chivalry, an arrangement which, as might be expected, fully achieved its object.—Richard of Devizes, Cott. MS., Domitian XIII., f. 73, b.

known that William had died without any will¹, and no attempt was made to produce it; but if the widowed queen, with her lion-hearted brother at her elbow, chose to assert that he had left one, it was somewhat dangerous to contradict her. By the advice of his council, Tancred consented to an interview with the English king, in order to settle these claims. The particulars of the meeting are given in the original French chronicle, which forms the foundation of Langtoft's translation². Richard very unceremoniously denounced upon the unfortunate king threats of war, in case he refused to grant his sister's dowry in full, and to comply with the demands made upon him. Upon this, Tancred appealed to Joanna herself, who just then came in, to confirm his assertion that her dowry had already been given up to her. "King Tancred," said she, turning to her brother, "has truly done what he ought about all things that belong to me, but, my brother, he ought to surrender to you the grand pavilion made of rich silks, the golden table twelve feet long, with its tressels, the twenty-four silver cups, and the twenty-four silver dishes, richly gilt, which my lord the king at his death bequeathed to you." "Lady," said Tancred, suppressing his amazement as well as he best could at this marvellous list, "I shall certainly grant this bequest to my lord the king." One may almost realize the sly smile of triumph curling the lip of the late imprisoned queen as she thus played off her revenge upon her tormentor, and the whole scene is rich in the ludicrous.

The unmerciful Joanna did not stop here. She subsequently found out that her spouse had also bequeathed to King Richard 60,000 measures of corn, the same of barley, and an equal number of wine, with 100 galleys fully equipped with all warlike apparatus, and stored with food for two years—very convenient discoveries for the crusading

¹ Chron. Casin., Carusius, vol. i., p. 514.

² Cotton. MS., Vitellius, A. X., f. 142 b.

king. Also that the silken tent before mentioned was one large enough for two hundred soldiers to dine in at once, and "rich enough to serve an emperor at a parlement¹." No resource remained for poor Tancred but to make the best he could of these extravagant demands, and he accordingly agreed to compromise the affair by paying to King Richard the enormous sum of 20,000 ounces of gold; but it was on the express stipulation that it should stand in lieu of all demands, and that Queen Joanna should discover no fresh codicils in her late husband's will².

King Philip, who assisted in the conclusion of this arrangement, received one-third of the profits—a wonderful instance of moderation, as the French historians tell us, for he was certainly entitled to half³!

As the landed property of the queen-dowager would not be rendered easily available for her use after her departure from Sicily, she exchanged it with King Tancred for the sum of 100,000 marks in ready money⁴—an impolitic arrangement, as it ultimately proved, since with improvident profusion she lavished almost the whole of the sum upon her brother during the crusade.

Richard continued on good terms with King Tancred during the remainder of his stay, and a treaty of alliance was formed between them, by which it was agreed that Arthur of Bretagne, the heir-presumptive to the English crown, should marry the daughter of Tancred; and the Sicilian king, glad to obtain this public recognition of his title from the potent sovereign of England, again paid

¹ Brompton, Twysden, p. 1183. Bened. Petrob., vol. ii., p. 612. Langtoft, vol. i., p. 152. Vinisauf, Gale, vol. ii., 312. Richard of Devizes, Chron. Richard I., Cotton, MS., Domitian, XIII., f. 73.

² Hoveden, pp. 385-6.

³ Rigordus de Gestis Phil. Aug., Bouquet, vol. xvii., p. 30. Chroniques de St. Denis, Ibid., p. 372. Les Grandes Chron. de France, vol. iv., p. 75.

⁴ William of Newburgh, vol. ii., p. 414. Hemingford, Gale, vol. ii., p. 522. Hoveden, p. 385.

down 20,000 ounces of gold, as the dowry of his daughter¹. The immense amount of money produced by King Tancred seems almost incredible; but if we are to believe the assertion of an old German historian, quoted by Scheidius, that when, after his death, his successor, the Emperor Henry, entered the palace, he found the chairs and tables of the purest gold, beside one hundred and fifty mules' load of gold, silver, and precious stones, we must conclude that even these enormous taxes upon him had not materially diminished his wealth.

Late events had so protracted the departure of the Christian army that, notwithstanding the restless impatience of the crusaders to join their brethren in the Holy Land, it was found impossible to sail before the spring. The thoughtless Richard spent the winter in squandering his newly-acquired wealth with the most reckless profusion among the inhabitants of Sicily, as well as among his comrades-in-arms. On Christmas-day he gave a grand feast at his castle of Mategriffin, presided over by himself and his sister, to which the King of France was invited, and a herald was sent round "to bid every soul in the place on that joyful day to King Richard's feast²." Philip came in great state, attended by a numerous train. "And what need I say more," exclaims the enraptured Vinisauf, one of the guests on this occasion; "he has no hard task that invites a willing guest; and who for the sake of wordly pelf would willingly be absent from King Richard's feast? Who shall enumerate the variety of dishes, or the splendid plate, or the rich liveries of the crowds of servants? Let him who wishes to know it only contemplate the magnanimity of Richard's mind; nothing was to be seen indecent or out of order, or not precious and praiseworthy. The very dishes were of no

¹ Brompton, Twysden, p. 1184. Vinisauf, Gale, vol. ii., p. 313. Cotton. MS., Claudius, B. vii., fol. 135.

² Vinisauf, Gale, vol. ii., p. 315.

other material than gold or silver; all the cups were of gold or silver of wonderful embossed work, or subtilly wrought by the gnawing tooth of the file with images of men or beasts, or gemmed with precious stones."

All the company departed right joyously, as well they might, from such an entertainment, Richard forcing Philip first, and then each of the other guests, to take away with them that article which pleased them best, of whatsoever value it might be¹.

As soon as the winter storms were over, and the first gales of spring wafted over the Adriatic, the crusading armies prepared for their departure; and on Ascension Sunday, the 25th of March, 1191, King Philip and his army set out on their voyage; but Richard, who was in daily expectation of the arrival of his mother and his plighted bride, Berengaria of Navarre, was not disposed to move.

At length, the news of their landing was received, and Richard hastened to the town of Riga, beyond Faro, where he understood they had arrived under the guardianship of Philip, Earl of Flanders, "a gentle and wise baron," and welcomed them with the greatest joy². He led them thence to Messina, where they were received by the Princess Joanna, who had come thither to meet them, and who for a few days enjoyed the society of her mother, from whom she had been so long parted³. But Queen

¹ Vinisauf, Gale, vol. ii., p. 315.

² Bernard the treasurer, Muratori, *Rer. Ital. Script.*, vol. vii., col. 809, and the continuation of William of Tyre's Chronicle, Muratori, *Collectio Amplissima*, vol. v., fol. 632, intimate that Richard did not see his mother, and that Berengaria was received by Queen Joanna, but they are contradicted by Vinisauf, the constant companion of King Richard. Gale, vol. ii., p. 316, and also by Langtoft, vol. i., p. 153.

³ Rich. of Devizes. fol. 75. The character given by this chronicler of Queen Eleanora and her ward is curious, as being the testimony of a contemporary. "Queen Eleanora, a woman incomparably beautiful and chaste, powerful and modest, humble and discreet, qualities most rarely found in woman, with a spirit becoming in one who had had two husbands kings and two sons kings, yet unwearied with all her labours

Eleanor, having important business devolving upon her in the absence of her son, was not able to linger long, and she took her departure accordingly for Rome¹. Joanna did not go along with her mother, for it had been already arranged that she should accompany King Richard on his crusading expedition. Whether this arrangement originated in her own love of adventure, disappointed as she had been of her former journey to the Holy Land, by the premature death of her husband, or whether, in compliance with her brother's wishes, she went as companion for Queen Berengaria, we are not told. The royal ladies, however, formed for each other, almost at first sight, a strong and lasting attachment.

All hands were now at work to prepare for their speedy embarkation, and on the Wednesday after Palm Sunday, being the 10th of April, 1191, seventeen days after King Philip's departure, the whole fleet, consisting of one hundred and fifty ships, fifty galleys, and ten provision ships, set sail². Joanna and her elect sister-in-law occupied the same vessel, which was in the van of the fleet, towards the right; having a band of soldiers to guard them, and a crowd of obsequious servants to attend them.

The ships, though all ready, still remained immoveable till the jolly king, having partaken of a hearty dinner, bade farewell to the inhabitants, and mounted the royal galley, "and Faro might well boast," says Vinisauf, "that her seas never saw such a fleet depart, when all that multitude of ships was impelled over the deep by the strong strokes of the rowers³."

But woeful disasters awaited this proud armament.

whose activity age could not diminish, taking with her the daughter of the King of Navarre, a damsel more prudent than beautiful, followed the king, her son," &c.

¹ Hoveden, p. 392.

² Chron. Mailros, Gale, vol. i., p. 179.

³ Vinisauf, p. 316.

Contrary winds arose almost as soon as they had quitted the sheltered ports of Sicily, and in spite of the vigilance of King Richard, "who watched over his ships," we are told, "like a hen over her chickens¹," it was impossible to keep them together. The vessel in which the queens and their train were, being a swift sailer, became separated from the remainder, and to their no small alarm they found themselves tossing day after day in the Mediterranean, with but a few scattered barks, while the main body of the fleet, and above all the ship of the king himself, were not anywhere to be seen. To add to their discomfort, the violent motion brought on such terrible sea-sickness, that all sense or discernment was lost by the greater part of the sailors, as well as by the royal ladies themselves.

At length, the weather clearing, they came in sight of land, which proved to be the island of Cyprus, whither Joanna had offered earnest prayers that they might find a safe haven, "when on the vigils of St. Mark, a little before sunset, a cloud covered the heavens with black darkness, and behold the spirit of the storm rushes out, and a vehement wind, most adverse to voyagers, wrecks three of their ships on the shore." Isaac, the Cypriot Emperor, permitted the most barbarous treatment of the unfortunate crews of the lost ships, who were stripped of all they had, and thrown into prison. Ascertaining from them the name and quality of the occupants of the stately vessel which was seen vehemently straining in the distance, he sent them a courteous message, inviting them to land and refresh themselves². The ladies, however, suspected treachery. Probably from their deck they had seen enough of the fate of those who had already landed to render them fearful, and this invitation threw them into

¹ Vinisauf, p. 317.

² Ibid., p. 319. Bernard, ut supra. Cont. Gul. Tyre, Martène, Coll. Amp., vol. iv., col. 632.

great perplexity; dreading to be made captives if they submitted, or to be insulted if they refused, at a time when it was utterly impossible for them to put out to open sea. No definite answer had as yet been returned to Joanna's repeated inquiries whether her brother King Richard had passed that way¹. They therefore sent an evasive answer, with a half promise that they would accept the emperor's invitation on the following day². "But while the queens," says Vinisauf, "anxious, with biting cares, were sadly complaining and talking to one another, an unforeseen aid arrived, by the good providence of God, for that same Sunday, while they were anxiously looking out, behold between the foaming tops of the curling billows, two ships, moving like swift sea-birds, appeared, sailing towards them; and while the queens and others beholding were yet uncertain, and doubting who they might be, other ships hove in sight, and a great fleet following rushed swiftly towards the port, and the heavier their former desolation, the greater was now their rejoicing," for this proved to be the long-expected fleet of King Richard. His delay had been occasioned by an illness, which had detained him ten days at Rhodes, and now, hearing from his sister the tale of their adventures, along with the fate of his shipwrecked mariners, his wrath was roused. He sent messengers to Isaac to demand instant restitution of his imprisoned soldiers and their goods, which was not only refused, but troops were assembled on the shore to oppose his landing³.

"Arme we us, I rede (*say*)
 And go we hardilie,
 And we salle mak them schede⁴ (*depart*)
 And sondre a partie,"

¹ Cont. Gul. Tyr., ut sup.

² Vinisauf, p. 321. The account of Bernard, the treasurer, differs in some points. He asserts that an attack was actually menaced by Isaac, Murat, vol. vii., col. 809. Hoveden says he would not permit them to enter the port, p. 393.

³ Langtoft, vol. i., p. 159. Vinisauf, p. 322. Bernard, ut supra.

⁴ The German *scheiden* still bears this signification, though the word is lost from our language.

exclaimed King Richard, as he ordered a general attack, both by land and sea, on the imperial troops, who stood arrayed in the most splendid uniforms and richest armour, with gorgeous banners of purple floating above. But the cowardice of these gay soldiers woefully belied their gallant appearance. The assault of Richard was successful on all hands. The king, following the flying emperor, challenged him to single combat, but Isaac preferred trusting to his heels rather than to his sword in the contest with Cœur de Lion and his far-famed battle-axe¹. His flight was followed by the capture of the city of Limoussa, where at length the wearied and sea-worn princesses found a secure asylum², while their hero, prosecuting his success, surprised and took prisoners the greater part of Isaac's forces, as well as his imperial ensign, "a faire thing, the banner of the lond," as Langtoft quaintly calls it.

The mortified emperor was forced to conclude a peace, and King Richard returned to his queen and sister at Limoussa. Here they were presently joined by a fresh guest, Guy de Lusignan, the ex-King of Jerusalem, who had been expelled by Philip of France in favour of the Marquis of Montferrat. He was kindly received by the king, who comforted him with a present of 2000 marks, and afterwards bestowed upon him the island of Cyprus.

Preparations were now making for the marriage of

¹ The description of this formidable weapon, by an old English poet, is as follows:—

King Richard, as I understond,
Ere he went of Englonde,
Made an axe for the nones (*purpose*)
Therewith to cleave the Saracens' bones!
The head in sooth was wrought full weele;
Thereon were twenty pound of steele;
And whenne he came in Cyprus land,
This ilkon axe he toke in hand.

Harl. MS., No. 4690, f. 112 b., col. 2. For an account of the wondrous deeds wrought by aid of this same battle-axe, see fol. 114 b., col. i.

² Hoveden, p. 393 b.

Richard with his long-plighted Berengaria, and in the city he had recently conquered, with his watchful troops still in arms to guard against any surprise, and surrounded by all the splendours of military pomp, were the nuptials of Cœur de Lion solemnized¹. On Queen Joanna, as the only female companion of the bride, would necessarily devolve much of the care of this ceremonial, and she doubtless participated in the pleasure of her "right joyous and jocund" brother, on receiving as her sister, one whom she already regarded with such tender affection.

Meanwhile the crest-fallen Cypriot emperor, as proud as he was weak, began to resume some of his former *hauteur*, and to slight the terms of the treaty he had made with King Richard. His steward Statin gravely remonstrated with him on the injudiciousness of his conduct; and was rewarded for his fidelity by the present of a silver dish, which the irascible emperor, then sitting at dinner, snatched from the table and hurled at the head of his unfortunate steward, who, highly affronted, took his departure, and joined King Richard²; but Isaac was speedily taught better manners. His only daughter, "whom," we are told, "he loved better than any creature in this world, and even than his treasures," fell into the hands of Richard³; and no sooner did the father hear this, than he gave up all idea of resistance, hastened to the king, and flinging himself at his feet, yielded himself up as his prisoner; only stipulating, with a last remaining spark of vanity, that he should not be put into irons. Richard lifted him up and seated him by his side, and then brought out his daughter to meet him. "When he saw her, he rejoiced inexpressibly, and kissed her over and over again, with tears flowing from his eyes." One is almost tempted to forgive the aged emperor his boasting

¹ Vinisau, p. 324. Hoveden, p. 394.

² Piers Langtoft, vol. i., p. 166.

³ Ibid.

and his cowardice, for the sake of this strong and passionate attachment to his child, with whom he chose rather to submit to imprisonment, than to struggle for an empire without her. His desires appear to have been gratified. Wearing silver fetters, he—

Taken is to loke
To Berengere and Jone,
And *they him undertoke*,
Those ladies ever ilkone.

And as the Cypriot princess was already committed to the charge of the two queens¹, we may presume that they would allow a frequent intercourse between their prisoners.

Joanna, with Berengaria and Guy de Lusignan, remained a short time longer at Limoussa, while her brother completed the conquest of the island of Cyprus, which occupied him for several weeks². Meanwhile he heard that the city of Acres was likely soon to fall into the hands of the besieging army of Philip of France and the other crusaders. "God forbid it should be taken before I arrive!" was Richard's exclamation, and he hastened his preparations for embarkation. Although Berengaria was now the wedded wife of the king, she sailed as before, not in the vessel with her lord, but with her sister, the Sicilian queen. They commenced their voyage on the 1st of June³, thus described by Langtoft⁴:

His wille has Richard sped
In Cipres far and nere,
And Isaac forth is led
With Jone and Berengere.
At Tripoli to sojourne—
And there thei mad a crie
To Acres for to turne
All wholly their navie;

¹ Langtoft, vol. i., p. 167. Vinisauf, p. 328. Brompton, Twysden, p. 1200. Hoveden, p. 394.

² Sicard's Chron., Muratori, Rer. Ital. Script. Ant., vol. vii., col. 613.

³ Vinisauf, p. 328. Diceto, Twysden, col. 661.

⁴ Vol. i., p. 169.

Now are all on flote;—
 God gif tham grace to spede
 With doughty foe to note (*wrestle*)
 When thei come to dede.

The two queens arrived at Acres on the 12th of May¹, before King Richard, and were received on their landing by Philip Augustus. But it was in "woeful time and dread" that these royal ladies made their appearance in Syria. Great discouragement prevailed among the Christian host, the result of a famine, which was so severely felt, that

Men gaf fiveten schillyngs
 For a goos or a hen,
 For the grete lordyngs
 Bouht for sick men.
 An egg by it selve
 For five schillyngs was bouht;
 A pear for pennies twelve,
 Or they had it nouht.
 The comon of the oste
 Bouht them hors flesch,
 Or mules or assis roste
 Or haf bene mete-lesse².

Added to the inconveniences they had thus to undergo, the Greek fire, so dreaded by the warriors of the cross, who surnamed it wild-fire, was frequently thrown into the camp from the hostile ramparts of Acres, and rendered an abode there neither safe nor pleasant. In these circumstances the arrival of the brave King Richard was eagerly anticipated, and most enthusiastically was he greeted by the crusading hosts³, who looked upon him as a delivering angel. He is said to have wept when the sufferings of the Christians were detailed to him, accompanied with

¹ Hoveden, p. 394.

² Piers de Langtoft, vol. i., pp. 174-5. Another chronicler says, that the nobles themselves ate horse-flesh as a delicacy.—Cotton. MS., Claudius, B. VIII., fol. 132, col. 1.

³ "Receu fu en joie souveraine de l'ost des crestiens, q'li longuement avoient là sis devant la citié. En larmes et en souspirs le receurent aussi comme se ce fust un ange qui du ciel fust descendu."—Les Grandes Chroniques de France, M. Paulin, Paris, vol. iv., p. 77.

strong expressions of the hope of deliverance they entertained from him, and to have replied—

“To Criste for me biseke (*beseech*)
That he gyve me that grace,
The Christendom to eke (*free*)
The Sarazins to chace¹.”

The wish of Richard was granted. He displayed his usual romantic valour, and in a few days the city was taken, and the banners of the cross floated over the proud ramparts of Acres². “With great joy and exultation, glorifying God, and giving thanks,” the triumphant hosts entered the city; and we may imagine that to none would their conquest be a source of greater joy than to the two queens, who must have been thoroughly wearied of the perils and tumult of a camp life, and glad to exchange it for the luxurious seclusion of the oriental mansion, in which, surrounded by a train of maidens, they were now placed by the English king. The royal palace of Acres had been assigned to King Richard, while that of the templars was the abode of King Philip³. But no visits from the French king to the beautiful dowager now cheered the solitary hours of the queens; for the dissensions which arose between him and Richard led to his speedy abandonment of the crusade. Queen Joanna’s fascinations however were exercised, though unconsciously to herself, in a very different quarter. King Richard, from his first arrival in the Holy Land, had been struck with the nobility which stamped the character of his great adversary the Sultan Saladin; and in spite of the deadly warfare waged between them, the two potentates were so far from entertaining feelings of personal animosity towards each other, that they frequently exchanged presents of birds, wine, and fruits, and friendly embassies were several times

¹ Langtoft, vol. i., p. 176,

² Sicard’s Chron., Muratori, vol. vii., col. 614. Ben. Petrob., vol. ii., p. 166. Vinisauf, p. 841.

³ Vinisauf, pp. 341-2. Bened. Petrob., ut supra.

sent on both sides to try to arrange the terms of a pacification. One of Saladin's ambassadors was his brother, Melech Adelus. This prince shared so greatly the favour of Cœur-de-Lion, that on one occasion they are recorded to have met in a tent erected for the purpose at a distance from the camp, and to have passed the whole day till vespers in friendly conversation¹. Richard went even further than this. When Melech Adelus visited him, he allowed him access to the female members of his family, a privilege rarely indeed granted to an infidel; but King Richard's recklessness of spirit often led to deeds that wofully outraged the etiquette of his age; and when the young Saracen, smitten with the charms of the fair Joanna, demanded her hand in marriage, Richard, with the same heedless disregard of propriety, gave ear to the proposal, and actually entered into arrangements with the prince, by which he consented to relinquish the maritime towns acquired by the Franks in Syria in favour of his sister, on condition that Saladin would do the same for his brother, with a proviso that his sister, "who," he says, "has come up with him to pay her adorations at Jerusalem," may have a residence assigned her in the holy city. These propositions were accordingly transmitted to Saladin, but he at once rejected them. Adelus, however, fired with passion, sent another embassy of magnates and elders to his brother, to induce him by all the arguments in their power to yield. The sultan, troubled at the importunity of their demand, called a council of his wise men; they advised him not to overwhelm his brother with grief by an obstinate refusal, but to feign compliance, professing their firm assurance that the thing could never really be brought to pass; for that the lady, daughter of so great a king, was never likely to consent to wed an infidel. "And this," added they, "her brother knows

¹ Abuphuragius, Chron. Syriac. Ricardi Angliæ Regis, translated by Paul Jac., Bruns., p. 9.

right well; but he is ever wont to be merry, or perhaps he has proposed these things in his craftiness." Now, whether King Richard were in jest or earnest, we presume not to decide; but it is certainly out of character with his chivalrous sincerity to suppose that he merely used the passion of his Saracen friend as a handle to kindle dissensions between him and his brother, though this supposition was evidently entertained by the "cunning men" who formed Saladin's council. According to their advice, the sultan sent messengers to convey to his brother and the English king the tidings of his compliance with their wishes. One point only remained to be gained, and that was the consent of the lady herself. Melech Adelus, with his Saracenic notions of female obedience, seems to have lost sight of the possibility of any obstacle arising here, or he would have sought to win the *heart* before he had solicited the *hand* of the Sicilian queen. King Richard, however, played the part of suitor for him, and most assiduously too, according to his own account, for he informed the sultan's ambassadors, "Behold these three days have I laboured night and day to persuade my sister, but she is not to be moved; she says, 'If he would become a true Christian, then it may take place; but otherwise, never.'" But as on the one hand the ambition of becoming an oriental princess could not prevail with Joanna to turn traitor to her religion and marry an infidel, so neither on the other could the fascination of her charms prevail with her lover to abandon his faith, and the negotiations were therefore dropped¹.

Soon afterwards the English king, having himself superintended the repairing of the walls of Acres, left his wife and sister there under the care of Bertram de Verdun, while he prosecuted his chivalrous designs². Rich, however, as the

¹ Abuphuragius, Chron. Syriac. Ricardi Angliæ Regis, translated by Paul Jac., Bruns., pp. 5, et seq.

² Vinisauf, p. 345. Hoveden, p. 397 b.

campaign of King Richard was in the romantic and the marvellous, we must refrain from following him.

During his absence the two queens lived in great retirement. With the Cypriote princess, who was their constant companion, and amidst the scenes of oriental magnificence, in which their time was spent, the lovely and gentle Berengaria, the spirited Joanna, equally beautiful, though in a style strikingly dissimilar, with the melancholy dark-eyed Greek maiden reclining at their feet, must have formed a group which any painter might covet as a model.

Their residence in the Holy Land lasted more than a year. At length, in the August of 1192, King Richard returned to Acres, and preparations were made for their voyage homewards. The two queens, still inseparable, set sail with their young captive on the 29th of September. They had a slow but safe and pleasant voyage, and proceeded to Sicily, where they spent some time as the guests of King Tancred¹. What the motives of Joanna were in visiting her former domains, whether she was prompted by a desire once more to behold scenes that had been so dear to her, or by a love of tormenting with her presence her old enemy Tancred, who she well knew durst not attempt a renewal of his former practices, we are left to guess. He was not long troubled with these self-invited visitors, however, for they shortly afterwards proceeded to Rome, under the guardianship of Stephen de Turnham², where they were honourably received by Pope Cælestine and the Romans, and remained for half a year in the ancient city, through fear of the Emperor Henry VI., the husband of Joanna's old friend, Costanza of Sicily, who was at open enmity with King Richard. On their departure from Rome, the pope gave them in charge to Cardinal Mellar, by whom they were conducted to Pisa,

¹ William of Newburgh, vol. ii., p. 456

² Hoveden, p. 417.

thence to Genoa, and thence by sea to Marseilles. Here they were received by the King of Aragon, who showed them all reverence and honour, and accompanied them as far as the province of Toulouse, where they were met by the far-famed Raimond of St. Giles, the future husband of Joanna, son of the then Earl of Toulouse, Raimond V., and of Constance, sister to Louis le Jeune of France, to whom they were no strangers, as he had formed one of the crusading host, and he escorted them in safety to Poictou¹.

It has been said that it was during this journey that the gallant Raimond won the heart of the Sicilian queen. Though her after conduct gives too much colour to this supposition, yet it is to be hoped, for the sake of her character, that it is not correct, since Raimond was at that time a married man; but his matrimonial fetters sat very lightly upon him. The fact, however, of his divorce and marriage almost immediately afterwards with the Princess Bourgigne, daughter of the Emperor of Cyprus, so long the captive companion of the queens, proves that the feeling, if it did exist, was not reciprocal on his part, and that it was the dark eyes of the Greek maiden, and not the bright ones of Queen Joanna, that had fascinated him. This marriage was evidently one of love, and not of policy, since Bourgigne was actually *en route* to join a Flemish lord to whom she had been contracted during the crusade, when she was induced to break through her engagement and become the wife of Raimond².

¹ Hoveden, p. 417.

² Some confusion exists respecting the identity of this princess. Vaissette says that she was the daughter of Amauri de Lusignan, the second French king of Cyprus, (Hist. de Languedoc, vol. iii., p. 549), and this opinion is countenanced by the authors of "L'Art de Verifier les Dates," vol. v., p. 124. On the other hand, M. le Beau, in his Histoire du Bas Empire, vol. xx., p. 226, distinctly states that the daughter of the Emperor Isaac came to Europe, where she was married to a Flemish noble, who in vain demanded from the King of Cyprus, in her behalf, the restitution of the kingdom. Now, the anonymous con-

The earl, now in his thirty-seventh year¹, had already been twice married. His first wife was Ermensinda de Pelet, heiress by her mother of the earldom of Melgorne, who died in 1176²; his second was Beatrice, the sister of Viscount Beziers³, and this unfortunate lady was the sharer of his home at the time when he became so desperately enamoured of the Cypriot princess. On his return, after attending the royal ladies to Poictou, anxious to free himself from matrimonial incumbrances, he proposed to the Lady Beatrice that she should enter the cloister. Her shrewd reply was, that she was quite willing to become a nun, if he would consent to become a monk; but that was by no means the design of her lord, and he contrived to render her home so uncomfortable, that shortly afterwards she appeared more than reconciled to a cloistered life, and on his promising to provide her with all necessities, she became a nun hermitess⁴; thus leaving

tinuator of William of Tyre relates the same thing of the wife of Raimond VI., who, he says, was the daughter of the Emperor of Cyprus, and that her second husband, a relation of the Earl of Flanders, actually landed in Cyprus to assert her rights, but was compelled to retire;—thus completely identifying the two persons.—*Mart., Coll. Amp.*, vol. v., col. 659. This detailed account of the contemporary chronicler in Martène is too strong to be easily surmounted. The mistake of calling the Princess Bourgigne a daughter not of the Emperor Isaac, but of Amauri de Lusignan, may be supposed to originate from her being generally merely styled “the daughter of the King of Cyprus,” on which the genealogists naturally reverted to the reigning monarch, and, forgetting that the deposed emperor had a daughter, assigned her to King Amauri,—overlooking the difficulty that she is styled “daughter of the king” in the early part of 1293, whereas Amauri de Lusignan did not mount the Cypriot throne until 1294.

¹ He was born in 1156. See Catel, *Hist. Comtes de Toulouse*, p. 221. *Chron. Languedoc*, p. 235. *Gul. de Pod. Laur.*, Bouquet, vol. xix., p. 198.

² Vaissetus, *Hist. Occitanica*, vol. iii., p. 548. La Faille, *Ann. de Toul.*, vol. i., p. 105.

³ *Geneal. Com. Toul.*, p. 225. Pierre de Valsernay, *Hist. Albig.*, Bouquet, vol. xix., p. 9.

⁴ P. de Valsernay, *ut supra*. Catel, *Hist. des Comtes de Toulouse*, p. 223.

Raimond at liberty to espouse the fresh object of his attachment.

But conjugal stedfastness did not form one of the virtues of the earl's character. He soon grew weary of his Cypriot wife, and a divorce took place between them some time before the year 1196¹. The discarded princess took refuge with her former suitor, who was good-natured enough to overlook the indignity with which he had been treated, and received her as his wife².

Ever since the marriage of Henry II. with Eleanora of Aquitaine had given the English kings a claim to so many of the southern provinces of France, contests had arisen between them and the Earls of Toulouse about the possession of Toulouse, which was claimed alike by both³. The struggle was still continued by Raimond the sixth of that name, who became Earl of Toulouse, Marquis of Provence, and Duke of Narbonne, by the death of his father in 1194⁴. At length, weary of war, Raimond sent the Abbot of Castro to the Norman Court to negotiate a peace⁵, and King Richard found a way of settling this long-continued dispute, that proved perfectly satisfactory to both parties. This was by offering to Earl Raimond the hand of his sister Joanna in marriage, and with her, ceding all claim to the contested province⁶.

That this negotiation took place with the full concurrence of the princess, who was then with her brother

¹ Pet. Val. Sern., Hist. Albigens., p. 9. Chron. Toulouse, p. 235, Bouquet, vol. xix. Catel, ut supra. "Quant il l'ont tant tenue com il vout, il la mist hors de sa terre," is the simple expression of a contemporary chronicler.—Martène, Coll. Amp., vol. v., p. 649.

² She is incidentally mentioned as being at Rouen in 1195, and journeying from thence to Chinon.—Stapleton's Introduction to Rotuli Scaccarii Normanniæ, p. cxlvii. This might probably be before her divorce.

³ Hemingford, Gale, vol. i., p. 494.

⁴ Chroniques de St. Denis, Bouquet, vol. xvii., p. 381. Catel, p. 221. Chron. Toul., ut supra.

⁵ Acherius Spicilegium, vol. vii., p. 343.

⁶ Paradin, Alliances Geneal., p. 877. Anselme, Hist. Geneal. de la France, vol. ii., p. 687. Raynal, Hist. de Toulouse, p. 61.

at Rouen, is unquestionable; for Richard was strongly attached to his sister. Her character in some points bore a close resemblance to his own, and he had already had too much experience of her obstinacy in matrimonial affairs to attempt again to dispose of her hand without previously consulting her inclinations, since being now in her thirty-second year, she evidently considered herself quite old enough to have a will of her own, and had spirit to assert it too. It must be confessed that the predilection shown by the gay dowager for a man who had two wives still living does not redound much to her credit,—the less so that the wife whose place she consented to take was the Grecian princess with whom she had long lived on such familiar terms. But this fact tends to prove, what her after conduct fully evinced, that Joanna was tenderly attached to the gallant earl.

Their wedding was celebrated with great splendour at Rouen in October, 1196, in presence of the king and the queen-mother Eleanor; and Richard himself gave his sister away. As a mark of brotherly affection he also bestowed upon her the lands of Agenois and la Querny, on condition that the Earls of Toulouse should hold them as a fief of the King of England as Duke of Aquitaine, and serve him in person with 500 men for one month, whenever the king made war in Gascony¹; and thus

¹ William Newbridge, vol. ii., p. 590. Ann. Waverley, Gale, vol. ii., p. 165. Brompton, Twysden, p. 1272. Rozoi, Annales de Toulouse, p. 213. This dowry-gift is also proved by a letter from the inhabitants of Corunna to Raimond VII., Earl of Toulouse, preserved among the MSS. in the Bibliothèque Royale, No. 6009, fol. 507, written in the old Provençal dialect, in which the following passage occurs: “Vos disem en vertat pel sacrament que fait vos avem quel Reis Richart, vostre oncle, quand era Como de Peithieus, et en apres quand fo Reis d’Angleterre, avia e tenia la justicia del Port Santa Maria, senes contrast, e senes part d’altrui, entre que donet Agenes al onrad senhor vostre paire R. Comte de Toulouse, quand lo donet sa soror la Reina Johanna vostre maire, per molher.” It is also proved, by a charter of Queen Joanna’s, with reference to these lands, of which a memorandum is to be found in the printed volume of the Charter Rolls of King John, p. 58 b. See also a letter of Innocent III., printed in Bouquet, vol. xix., p. 568.

Raimond gained very considerably in territory by this new alliance.

The town of Agennes was noble, and pleasantly situated between Toulouse and Bourdeaux; so that when the countess-queen chose to reside on her dower lands, she would be equally near to the principal city of her husband's domains, and to the southern capital of her brother¹.

Immediately after their marriage the bride and bridegroom proceeded to Toulouse, where, amidst the exhilaration of the honeymoon, the earl granted to the inhabitants of his capital a charter, containing a confirmation of all the privileges and franchises which his predecessors had granted to the city. This deed bears date November 12th, 1196, "after the count had married the Lady Joanna, sister to the King of England²."

Although Joanna is here only styled lady, she yet bore to the close of her life the regal title to which she had so long been accustomed. This fact is evident from the charters of her son Raimond, who calls himself "Raimond Earl of Toulouse, Narbonne, &c., son to the illustrious *Queen Joanna*," leaving out his father's name altogether³. This was a common mode in cases where the mother was considered of higher rank than the father, or where the multiplicity of wives rendered the mention of the mother's name indispensable to genealogical accuracy; and both these reasons held good in the present instance.

The name of Raimond VI. of Toulouse will be for ever immortalized by his association with the persecuted sect of the Albigenses. It was about the period of his marriage that these simple-minded men first became sufficiently formidable to attract the notice of the church; but however

¹ Chron. Toul., p. 236, Bouquet, vol. xix.

² Catel, Hist. des Comtes de Toulouse, p. 226.

³ Ibid. In his will he styles himself Raymond Conte de Toulouse, and Marquis de Provence, filz de la Reyne Jeanne. Colbert MS., No. 59, Bibliothèque Royale. See also Vaissette, Hist. de Languedoc, vol. iii., Preuves, pp. 143, 254, 255, 266, 270, 271.

deeply Raimond himself, either now or in his after-life, became impregnated with the new doctrines, they do not appear to have had any effect upon the mind of his consort, for Joanna died as she had lived, a true member of the Catholic Church, though hitherto she had not shown herself either a very devout or a very liberal one. It was far more congenial to this spirited dame to encourage by her presence the hosts of the Crusaders amidst the clang of trumpets and the waving of banners by the side of her brother Richard, the lion-hearted, than to patronize grave old monks or sedate abbots; and the almost entire absence of all records of monastic benefactions on her part gives plain intimation that she paid little attention to the then sacred duty of enriching the church. This circumstance does not speak favourably for the learning of the Princess Joanna; for the monasteries were in those days the sole receptacles of literature, and therefore uniformly patronized by all its admirers. Almost the only ecclesiastical gift of hers on record is that of half the proceeds of the fishery of Mirmanda to the church of Paranqueto, in the diocese of Agenois¹.

In the year subsequent to her marriage, the countess-queen became the mother of a son and heir, who was born at Beaucondrieu, in the district of Arles², and received the name of Raimond, which seems to have been handed down from one generation to another of the heirs of the Toulouse family as systematically and almost as invariably as their estates.

At the period of the birth of this boy some quarrels had arisen, on what ground we are not informed, between Earl Raimond and several of the neighbouring nobles, and he set off on a military expedition to support his

¹ See Gascon Roll, 11 Edw. I., membrane 5, where this grant is confirmed.

² Geneal. Com. Toul., p. 225, and Gul. de Pod. Laur., p. 198, Bouquet, vol. xix. Hoveden, p. 438. Chron. Norm., p. 255, Bouquet, vol. xiii.

cause. Whilst he was away, incursions were made upon his dominions by the Lords of St. Felix, and Joanna, deeply affronted by these insults offered to her absent lord, and determined to show that her woman's arm was not so powerless as they seemed to imagine, resolved herself to revenge them. She had scarcely recovered from the weakness incident to her situation when she took the field, and placing herself at the head of such troops as she was able to muster, besieged the rebel lords in the castle of Caser, but with little profit, for treason was busy in the ranks of her soldiers. They secretly furnished provisions and arms to the besieged, and finding still that their Amazonian mistress remained firm in pressing the siege, and was even likely, in spite of these obstacles, to take the castle, the traitors actually set fire to the camp. It was not till she was forced out by the rapidly-spreading flames, and when she had scarcely time to escape in safety, that this heroic woman could be prevailed upon to retreat before her foes¹.

The circumstances of this siege lead to the supposition that the war of religious bigotry was already, though covertly, begun, and that it was the suspicion entertained of Earl Raimond's inclination towards the party of the Albigenses that raised these tumults against him, and was the cause of the treason in the camp of his countess. This probability grows stronger from the fact that Raimond on his return found himself utterly unable to revenge the wrongs of his wife, and Joanna, who was not of a temper tamely to submit to insult, hastened to the court of her true-hearted brother King Richard, to claim from him that protection and assistance which she had never yet asked in vain. Her husband accompanied her, having refused the earnest invitation of Pope Innocent III. to free his character from all imputation of heresy, by

¹ Guill. de Puylaurens, *Hist. Albig.*, ut supra. Catel, p. 224. Gen. Com. Tol., p. 226, Bouquet, vol. xix.

taking the cross and going on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land¹.

They both spent the Easter festival of the year 1198 at the city of Mans, where King Richard then held his court².

What assistance Cœur-de-Lion granted to his sister and her spouse we are not informed. His frequent contests with Philip of France did not leave him any large body of troops at his disposal for foreign service; and it would seem that such aid as he did afford was inadequate to their necessities, for early in the following year Joanna again undertook a journey to the court of Rouen to seek for help. But the unfortunate countess reached Normandy only to hear the sad tidings of the death of her brave and beloved brother³.

Before she went to Rouen, she paid a visit to Fontevraud, the burial-place of the king, and there she remained several months to indulge her sorrow⁴.

Richard and Joanna had been more intimately associated together, both during the crusade and after the return of the king from his grievous captivity in Germany, than usually falls to the lot of royal brothers and sisters, and deeply and bitterly did the queen mourn his loss. Nor did the presence of her younger brother King John, who was then at Rouen, at all alleviate her sorrow. With this unworthy scion of the house of Plantagenet Joanna had little acquaintance, and still less sympathy; and the wrongs he had inflicted upon her favourite Richard were quite sufficient to alienate her affections from him, consequently little intercourse appears to have taken place

¹ Guil. de Puylaurens, ut supra. Raynaldus, *Annales Ecclesiastici*, vol. i., p. 35. Epist. Innoc. III. ad Raim. VI., Bouquet, vol. xix., p. 368.

² Hoveden, p. 442 b.

³ Jean de la Mainferme, *Clypeus Fontis Ebraldi*, tom. ii., p. 160. Gen. Com. Tolos, ut supra. Rozoi, *Annal. Toul.*, p. 215.

⁴ Rozoi, *Annales de Toulouse*, p. 215.

between them. She found, however, a faithful protector and friend in her mother Queen Eleanora, who was then at Rouen.

At this period Joanna, whose former extensive dowry half the princesses of Europe might have coveted, was so utterly destitute of resources, that she was indebted to the niggardly charity of her brother John for the scanty supply of one hundred marks to meet her necessities; and even this sum, we are told, was granted at the intercession of her mother the queen and the Archbishops of Canterbury, Rouen, and York¹.

Grief for the death of her brother, and for the misfortunes of her beloved husband, weighed so heavily on the heart of the countess-queen, that, combined with her situation, for she was a second time in her pregnancy, they brought on a heavy attack of sickness, which, after several months of protracted suffering, at length terminated fatally².

During her illness she had the comfort of a mother's presence, for Eleanora of Aquitaine was a frequent attendant by her bed-side. In her presence, and that of Walter Archbishop of Rouen, Joanna made her will, the only recorded particular of which is, that she bequeathed to the nuns of Fontevraud a yearly revenue of 1000 Anjevin sous, equal to 100 marks English, derivable from the salt mines of Agennois, to be spent for the sole use of their kitchen³.

As the hour of death approached, and the solemn realities of eternity were opening before the view of one, who, through a busy existence, had paid but little attention to them, conscience became vividly alarmed. The account

¹ Rotuli Chartarum, Anno 1^o Johan. Reg., membrana 21, p. 13 of the printed volume of Charter Rolls.

² Hoveden, p. 452.

³ Balioze MS., 411, fol. 334 b. Bibliothèque du Roi, Paris. This gift was confirmed by her son at Paris in 1226, and by the French king in 1296.

of her last hours is given us by a monk called Jean de la Mainferme, who had it from an eye-witness, and we subjoin the whole scene in a literal translation of his own words.

“Trusting,” says our chronicler, “to His truth and mercy, who will give a penny to him who works only at the eleventh hour, as well as to those who have laboured from the first, she greatly desired to assume a religious habit, and commanded the Prioress of Fontevraud to be summoned by letters and messengers; but when distance delayed her coming, feeling her end approaching, she said to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was then present, ‘O my lord father, have pity on me, and fulfil my earnest desire: furnish my body with the arms of religion to fight my adversary, that my spirit may be restored more pure and free to its Creator; for I know and believe, that if I might be joined in body to the Order of Fontevraud, I should escape eternal punishment.’ But the archbishop, trembling, said that this could not be lawfully done without her husband’s consent; but when he saw her constancy and the spirit of God speaking in her, moved by pity and conquered by her prayers, he with his own hand consecrated and gave her the sacred veil; her mother and the Abbot of Tarpigny, with other monks being present, and offered her to God and the Order of Fontevraud. She, now rejoicing, and unmindful of her pangs, declared she saw in a vision the glorious mother of God, and as the abbot told us, she cast her veil at the enemy, saying, ‘I am a sister and a nun of Fontevraud; thus strengthened, I fear thee not.’”

The death of the royal nun took place almost immediately after her assumption of the veil, in the month of September 1199, before she had quite completed her thirty-fourth year².

¹ Jean de la Mainf., ut supra. Nicquet, *Hist. de l’Ordre de Fontevraud*, pp. 256-8.

² Hoveden, p. 452. *Les Croniques des Normandie*, edited by M. F. Michel p. 68.

Her infant just struggled into existence, and "being regenerated," we are told, "in the sacred office of baptism, by the fore-named persons," it followed its dead mother, and was buried in the church of St. Mary's, at Rouen. But for the countess-queen, more illustrious obsequies were prepared. As a nun of Fontevraud, as well as a member of the house of Henry II., this stately monastery was chosen as the place of her interment. The Prioress of Fontevraud, arriving at Rouen, received the remains of the royal lady, and conducted them in solemn state to her monastery, where, attended by many honourable personages, she was interred by the side of her beloved brother King Richard, and at the feet of her illustrious sire Henry II¹.

Her effigies were carved in marble on her tomb, which was of the same material. Madame Jean Batiste de Bourbon, daughter of Henry the Great, and Abbess of Fontevraud, during whose rule the choir of the church was enlarged, in 1638, caused a stately mausoleum to be built for the family of Henry II., and their figures to be carved in white marble from the originals. Joanna kneels at the head of her father, with her hands clasped, and her head half bent in an attitude of devotion, which is fully carried out by the expression of the face. The features are well formed, but the partially-drooped eyelids take away from their animation. The hair is closely braided, and over it is thrown the long monastic veil, surmounted by a small coronet of fleur-de-lis; a close tunic and a full sweeping mantle, lying in folds on the ground, complete her attire².

Joanna appears to have possessed the art of conciliating the favour of her inferiors, for her two waiting maids, Beatrice and Alice, were so distressed at her death, that

¹ Geneal. Com. Toul., p. 226. Jean de la Mainferme, ut supra. Guillaume de Puylaurens, Hist. Albig., p. 198. Hoveden, p. 452. Chron. de Norm., Bouquet, vol. xiii., p. 255.

² Sandford's Genealogical History, p. 64, plate.

they assumed the veil in the Abbey of Fontevraud, where she was interred; and King John granted to each of them a small yearly stipend, to pray for her soul¹. King John also bestowed one hundred marks on the monastery of Torpigny, the abbot of which had been present at the death-bed of the queen, to offer up prayers for her soul; but, with that want of grace which characterized so many of his proceedings, instead of paying to the monks the money direct out of his treasury, he transferred a debt owing to him by Philip, Bishop of Durham, which was to be thenceforth considered as owing to them². The one hundred marks which Joanna herself had bequeathed to the church of Fontevraud, John retained in his own hands for many years, for we find, in the close roll of 1212, an order that this sum left "by the will of our dearest sister Queen Johanna," should be paid along with other benefactions to the monastery of Fontevraud³.

Earl Raimond was not at Rouen, at the time of his wife's death, nor did he come over to be present at her funeral; indeed, it is doubtful whether he ever repaid in an equal degree her fond and devoted affection, and the year after her decease, he again entered into the nuptial state with his fifth wife, Eleanor, sister of Peter, King of Aragon⁴.

Although Raimond of Toulouse was far from a perfect character, still the debt of gratitude owing to him by every true-hearted Protestant, for the support and protection he afforded to the persecuted Albigenses, demands that we should trace out, though briefly, the course of his future life. It is not an easy matter to form anything like a correct idea of the character of this earl. The monkish

¹ Rot. Chart. An. 1^o Joh. Reg., memb. 5, p. 25.

² Rot. de Oblatis, An. 1^o Joh. Reg., memb. 23, p. 70 in the printed volume of the Fine and Oblata Rolls.

³ Rot. Claus. An. 13^o Joh. R., p. 125 b.

⁴ Geneal. Com. Toul., p. 226. Guil. de Puylaurens, Bouquet, vol. xix., p. 199. La Faille, Annal. de Toul., vol. i., p. 105.

chroniclers are so extremely bitter against him for the assistance he lent to the "heretics," that they take an evident pleasure in painting his conduct in the darkest colours. No crime is too gross, no inconsistency too glaring, to be fastened upon him, whatever may be the improbability of their stories; and as they are the only historians to whom recourse is to be had for information, a distorted caricature is all we can hope to find. Fortunately, though the opinions of contemporary chroniclers of any period with reference to the characters they pourtray must ever have a powerful influence in forming our own, handed down as they frequently are without examination or allowance, by succeeding writers, yet still the current of events flows on independently of their prejudices, and when carefully looked into, often leads us to different, if not opposite conclusions.

It was in the year 1206, that the prevalence of the new sect of the Albigenses, or Vaudois, as they were sometimes called, from Peter Valdo, a burgess of Lyons, one of their founders, became sufficiently extensive throughout the whole of the fertile provinces of Toulouse, Languedoc, and Provence, to excite serious apprehensions at Rome. The zealous St. Dominic and thirteen other monks, were distributed over the infected regions, to inspect, exhort, and, if necessary, threaten the more refractory¹. On their arrival, they soon found, what had been before suspected, that the mischief had spread far beyond the bounds of the peasant's cot, that many of the nobler ranks were infected, and that at the head of these was the Earl of Toulouse himself². Intelligence to that effect was sent to Rome, which Raimond, who at this time was unwilling or afraid to break with the holy see, tried in vain to neutralize by sending counter-messengers. But his representations

¹ Hist. Des Comtes de Toul., p. 237. Bouchet, Annales d'Aquitaine, p. 92.

² Bouchet, Hist. de Provence, i. 214. Chron. Emonis. Matthæus, Analecta medii Ævi, vol. ii., p. 18.

were weak against those of the papal commissioners; he was excommunicated, a crusade was preached against him, and his dominions awarded to any who might choose to seize them¹.

Although Raimond had sufficiently favoured the heretics to bring upon himself this tempest of opposition, their doctrines had not as yet so touched his heart as to make him willing to yield up everything rather than his faith. His courage failed him in the hour of trial; for when a large army was assembled against him, which he had no means of resisting, he weakly yielded to the papal legate Milo, and promised to do all that was required of him².

The proverbial haughtiness of the Romish church was now to be gratified by the public and signal humiliation of its rebel opponent. The ceremony of absolution was performed in his own city of St. Giles; and Peter of Valsernay, who was present, gives a minute description of it.

Earl Raimond was led barefoot, clad in penitential vestments, to the door of the principal church, where the legate, with twenty-five archbishops and bishops, summoned from all the neighbouring districts, were assembled. In their presence, he solemnly swore to obey the church; and then the legate put a halter round his neck, by means of which he dragged the prostrate earl into the church, followed by others who beat him with rods, and this in the midst of a concourse of people so dense, that it was found impossible for the legate and his train to make their exit again by the usual way, and they were obliged, along with their now absolved penitent, to retire through the vaults³.

¹ Catel, p. 240. Gul. le Brito Philippidos, Bouquet, vol. xvii., p. 219, et seq. Les Grandes Chron. de France, vol. iv., pp. 136, 160. Nostradamus, Hist. de Provence, p. 173.

² Ann. Waverley, Gale, vol. ii., p. 192.

³ Pierre de Valsernay, Hist. Albige., pp. 16-18. Guil. de Puylaurens, Bouquet, vol. xix., p. 118. La Faille, Annales de Toulouse, vol. i. p. 107.

Another penance still more revolting was imposed upon the unfortunate earl, namely, that he should take the cross and assist in fighting against the heretics. To avoid the sentence of immediate forfeiture, which he knew must be followed by the most vehement persecutions of the Albigenses, should a true adherent of the see of Rome come into power, Raimond feigned compliance¹. He even undertook a journey to Rome to plead his own cause with the pontiff, against those who were so anxious to deprive him of his dominions; but still he could never be brought to consent to use those violent measures towards the extirpation of the heretics, which would alone satisfy the holy see.

At length, however, all temporizing on his part was over, he boldly and openly espoused the cause of the Vaudois; and it would appear from the testimonies of his opponents, that his heart was now fully with them. Under the flattering head of "*Aliæ ejusdem ineptiæ*," "other follies of this same Count Raimond," Peter of Valsernay relates the following particulars:—

"Once when about to combat his adversaries in Provence, he rose in the middle of the night and came to the house where some of the forbidden sect were holding in woe and dread their secret meeting, and said to them, 'Sirs, my brethren, various are the events of war; but whatever may happen to me, I hereby commend my soul and body into your hands².'" The presence of Earl Raimond at such a time and place, shews that he was familiar with these private services, and that he was neither an unwonted nor an unwelcome guest; and he always took two of these "heretics," clad in ordinary attire, with him, that if he should die in the expedition, they might be near him in his last hours³.

¹ Raynaldus, Annal. Eccles., vol. i., pp. 273 and 287.

² Pet. de Valser., Bouquet, vol. xix., p. 10.

³ Hist. Albigens., ut supra.

The tide of war which now rolled fiercely against him, had compelled him to fly for shelter to his father-in-law, the king of Aragon¹. "On a certain time," says Valsernay, "this cursed count fell sick in Aragon, and when he was very ill he caused a litter to be prepared, and himself carried therein to Toulouse, and when asked why such haste when he was so ill, the wretch answered, 'Because there are no good men in that land, in whose hands I might die.' He said also, 'I know I shall be disinherited for the sake of these good men, but I am prepared to sustain, not only forfeiture, but decapitation itself, if necessary, for their sakes.' Let these instances suffice of the incredulity and malice of this said wretch²," adds the indignant monk, thinking no doubt that sufficient had been advanced to brand the name of the unfortunate earl with everlasting infamy, by thus asserting his strong attachment to the good men, as the Albigenses uniformly styled themselves. Little did he dream that this very attachment would form in the eyes of posterity, a redeeming trait in his character.

The forfeiture which Raimond had professed himself willing to submit to rather than relinquish his faith, now came upon him, and his lands were bestowed by the pope on the far-famed Simon de Montfort, whose intense hatred and cruel persecution of the heretics rendered him a fit instrument of vengeance. His son, Raimond the younger, who still remained a true Catholic, had in vain put in his claim as the next heir to his father's forfeited estates, having travelled in disguise to Rome, and presented himself in person to plead his cause before the council³. The influence of Montfort was all powerful, and by his ambition, the war became one of politics as well as religion, for in his eagerness to take possession of his new

¹ Raynaldus, *Ann. Eccles.*, vol. i., pp. 320-1.

² *Hist. Albigensium*, Bouquet, vol. xix., p. 10.

³ Catel, p. 305. Pierre de Valsernay, p. 104.

dominions, he forfeited the estates of Catholics as well as Protestants, who adhered to his opponent, and even the dower-lands of Queen Joanna, over which he had no sort of claim, he took into his own hands¹.

His were not bloodless and uncontested victories however. Raimond had assembled his Tolosan subjects, and laid before them the requirements the Pope made from him, when, with a burst of enthusiasm, they declared they should never be complied with, but that they would rather all die together for their holy cause². Resistance against such preponderance of force as was accumulated on the opposite side, could not however be of long duration. After an obstinate battle, in which the King of Aragon fell a victim to the cause of his son-in-law, Toulouse itself was taken, and Raimond compelled to fly into Spain³. But the hatred excited by the tyranny of the new Earl of Toulouse, Simon de Montfort, was so intense, that on the first opportunity afforded by his absence, the citizens broke out into open rebellion, and recalled their former lord⁴. Strengthened by his presence, they resisted two desperate sieges, in the first of which their old enemy Montfort was killed⁵. The second, headed by Louis the Dauphin of France, was also repulsed by the desperate valour of the Tolosans, whose determination was wound up to the highest pitch⁶. Castle after castle surrendered

¹ Marca, *Hist. des Ducs de Bearn*, p. 526-7. Vaissette, *Hist. de Languedoc*, vol. iii., pp. 228, 235.

² Catel, p. 263.

³ *Gul. Arm. de Gest. Phil.*, pp. 224-5. *Hist des Comtes de Toulouse*, p. 307.

⁴ La Faille, *Ann. de Toul.*, vol. i., p. 123.

⁵ A curious speech, or rather prayer, offered up by Simon before the battle, is related in the Metrical Chronicle of Guillaume Guiart, called *Branche des Royaux Lignages*, published in the Collection of Buchon, vol. vii., pp. 213, 221. The most extravagant commendations are bestowed on him by the chroniclers. See Nicolas de Brady's *Poetical Chronicle*, Guizot, vol. xi., p. 427, and the *Contemporary Provençal Chron.*, published by M. C. Fauriel, in "*Documens Inédits*," &c., v. 8452, et seq., and 8684, et seq.

Catel, p. 316.

to Raimond, as soon as the opposing armies had retired; but in the midst of this gleam of success, death put an end to the struggles and sufferings of the dauntless earl¹. His decease was extremely sudden. He was seized with indisposition, when he was on his way to morning prayers, and became almost immediately speechless, though his hands continued clasped in the attitude of prayer, till in a few hours he expired.

While in the very article of death, one of the knights of St. John, to which fraternity the earl had belonged, arriving, threw over him his mantle, bearing as usual the cross of the order. The circumstance that in his last agonies the dying man seized hold on the part of the mantle where the cross was fixed, and is said to have pressed it to his lips, formed the ground of a strongly-asserted opinion that he died a true penitent for his heretical conduct². But this shallow supposition was considered at the time so utterly devoid of foundation, that the most strenuous exertions on the part of his son failed to procure for him the rites of Christian sepulchre³, and Bertrand de Guido, who wrote a century after, tells us that in the church of Toulouse he had seen the bones of the earl, which still remained unburied, deposited in the rich coffin provided by the knights of St. John, the skull being shown by the monks as a curiosity, from its having the figure of a fleur-de-lis traceable upon it.

Although the earlier course of Raimond VI. during this important struggle was marked by considerable fluctuation, and by a constant disposition to temporize, yet the firmness of his later years, and the particulars of his conduct before given, afford undoubted proof that his mind was at length brought under the influence of the pure and holy principles he professed; and there is ground to hope

¹ La Faille, vol. i., p. 126.

² Gul. de Puylaurens, Bouquet, vol. xix., p. 214.

³ Catel, p. 318. Gul. de Pod. Laur., Bouquet, vol. xx., p. 771.

and believe, that he died in reality as well as in name, a "*good man.*"

His son Raimond, though not inheriting his father's faith, became heir to his quarrels, in order to secure his earldom from the Montfort family; and although at first on this account he came into collision with the court of Rome, yet the willingness with which he engaged in the persecution of the heretical sects, sanctioning the most severe laws against them, and even consenting to their being burned alive, soon restored him to favour¹. Raimond the Seventh, and last earl of Toulouse, was buried by the side of his mother, Queen Joanna, in the church of Fontevraud, where his statue was erected opposite to hers, and at the feet of his grandfather, King Henry II. In person, he bears a strong resemblance to his mother, whom he can scarcely be said to have known, as she died when he was only two years old. His hair flows long and loose, and his brows are encircled by the coronet which he so unworthily wore².

He had only one daughter, whom he called after her grandmother Joanna, who was married by Queen Blanche of France to her son Alphonso; and, dying without posterity, the earldom of Toulouse, according to previous agreement, reverted to the crown of France³. In her the issue of Queen Joanna became finally extinct; for although in his early life Raimond had several natural children, which have created some confusion in genealogy, yet Raimond VII. was his, as well as Joanna's only legitimate offspring⁴.

¹ Raynald., vol. i., p. 613.

² Sandford, p. 64, plate.

³ Gul. de Pod. Laur., ut supra, p. 775.

⁴ A charter quoted by Catel, p. 225, and another in MS. 6009, fol. 87, Bibliothèque du Roi, mentions a son, Bertrand; and Baluze, in his *Histoire Généalogique de la Maison d'Auvergne*, vol. i., p. 282, and vol. ii., *Preuves*, p. 499, speaks of a daughter Wilhelmina, but the subject is ably settled by Vaisette, *Histoire de Languedoc*, vol. iii., pp. 549, 550, note x.

JOANNA,

ELDEST DAUGHTER OF KING JOHN.

Birth—Sought in marriage by her mother's lover—Sent for to Poitou—Given to de Lusignan—His marriage with Queen Isabella—Joanna betrothed to the King of Scotland—Detained in Provence—Disputes on the subject—She returns to England—Marriage at York—Goes into Scotland—Alexander's poverty—His sisters—His vigorous rule—Intercourse with England—Paucity of Scottish chroniclers—Joanna writes to Henry III.—Visited by her brother Richard—Christmas at York—Joanna's position—King Henry's gift to her—He writes to her—Galway Rebellion—Marriage of Princess of Scotland—Visits to England—Territorial disputes—York convention—Visit of Queen Eleanor—Joanna goes to England—Her illness—Death—Funeral ceremonies—Monastery of Tarente—Joanna's character—Alexander's character and death.

THE destinies of the royal daughters of England, associated as they inevitably are with, and dependant upon, those of their relatives of the other sex, will frequently be found to take their tone and colouring from the character of their sires or brothers. While the respect commanded by an energetic and able English monarch, rendered an alliance with him an object of anxious emulation among the continental princes, the female relatives of a feeble sovereign were almost invariably sacrificed to the timid policy which endeavoured either to bribe its enemies or reward its adherents by such boons. Very sad has often been the after-history of these royal marriages; yet, when we consider the utter neglect of attention either to age or

suitability of character, or, in fact, to anything but state-policy, with which they were contracted, the marvel is, not that they should have been frequently unhappy, but that they have occasionally proved so fortunate.

We have traced the splendid destinies of the daughters of the enterprising and ambitious Henry II., all of whom were wooed to occupy the most brilliant positions; but far otherwise was it with the unfortunate princesses, whose fates depended on the selfish policy of King John, or the all but imbecile weakness of his son and successor Henry III.

Joanna, the first of these princesses, was the eldest daughter of John by his beautiful and idolized wife, Isabella of Angoulême. The place and time of her birth are nowhere distinctly recorded, but it would seem probable that she was born in Normandy; for the earliest mention we find of her is in an order drawn upon the Norman exchequer for the payment of 18*l.* 13*s.* 3*d.*, for the hire of a vessel to carry her, along with her father's regal equipage, to England¹. This was in the year 1203; and as during that year Queen Isabella had principally resided at Caen and Bonneville, one of those towns was probably her birth-place. The circumstances connected with the marriage of her parents, and which exerted so powerful an influence upon Joanna's early life, are already familiar to most readers. The blind passion of the English king, countenanced by the ambition of the parents of Isabella as well as by her own, put him in possession of her hand although it had previously been plighted to Hugh de Lusignan, eldest son of the Earl of March². This rejected lover of the English queen seems to have entertained the fondest attachment to her—an attachment which not even her abandonment of him had power to alienate. Years passed

¹ Introduction to Stapleton's *Rotuli Scaccarii Normanniae*, p. cclxii.

² See the Life of Isabella of Angoulême, in the second volume of Miss Strickland's *Queens of England*.

away, and still he sought not the consolation of other nuptials, until his beloved Isabella had become the mother of a princess, now springing into girlhood, when he took the strange fancy of endeavouring to find in the daughter a substitute for the mother, and demanded the little Joanna in marriage. A lurking sense of the wrong he had inflicted upon the former lover of his queen appears still to have rankled in the breast of King John; for the petition of the gallant Earl Hugh was no sooner made than granted¹, and that with the full consent of Queen Isabella².

Young as Joanna was at this period, this was not the first solicitation for her hand. In a letter from King John to his barons, he informs them that the French king, Philip, had demanded the princess in marriage for his son Louis; but that he, taking warning by the fate of his own mother, Queen Eleanor, who had been divorced by Louis VII. of France, had rejected the proposal, lest his daughter should be subjected to a similar indignity.

The city of Gloucester was the place in which the nursery of Joanna, along with that of her brother Richard, was kept³; but shortly after the contract had been entered into with de Lusignan, King John, having gone over to the continent, sent word to the Abbot of Beaulieu and Friar Alan Martell, to bring over "the lady queen, our treasure, as much as we told you, our horses, and Richard our son, and Joanna our daughter⁴;" and, in obedience

¹ Rot. Chart. 15^o Joh., memb. 11, p. 197 b. in the printed Charter Rolls.

² See Letter of Pope Honorius III. to Hugh de Lusignan, Bouquet, vol. xix., p. 709, in which her consent to this marriage is distinctly alluded to.

³ This appears from an entry in the Patent Rolls of the 16th of King John, in which, at a time when the Queen Isabella had fallen under the royal displeasure, Theodric Fenton is ordered to go to Gloucester with the queen, and keep her there in the room "in which Joanna, our daughter was nursed," till further orders. Rot. Pat. 16^o Joh. memb. 9, p. 124 b.

⁴ This document is dated from Roche aux Moins, near Angers. Rot. Lit. Pat. 16^o Joh., p. 117, in the printed Patent Rolls.

to this summons, the royal family took their departure from England, and joined the king who was then in Poictou. Here they were met by the Earl of March, who received from the hands of her father the little princess, with a dowry of two thousand Poictevin livres, and the still more valuable grant of the lands and city of Saintong and the Island of Oleron; the magistrates of which were ordered to pay him the same service and homage they had been accustomed to render to the king himself¹.

It was in the year 1214, when Joanna could not be more than eleven or twelve years old, that she was thus made the bride of her mother's lover. Some one of the many castles in the sunny land of Provence, held by the powerful family of March, was assigned as the residence of the royal child, and there she passed her earlier years, guarded and tended as became the plighted bride of the heir of the house of Lusignan.

But however sincere might have been the oaths sworn to the Lady Joanna, all the projects of Earl Hugh were overthrown a few years after, by a circumstance which restored the possibility of his yet possessing the object of his early love. This was the death of King John, and the consequent widowhood of Isabella. The dowager-queen did not a second time reject the addresses which Earl Hugh immediately paid her; and, notwithstanding the anomalous position he occupied as her intended son-in-law, they were very shortly married².

The letter of Isabella to her young son King Henry III., announcing her second marriage, and her reasons for substituting herself for her daughter as the bride of the gallant Lusignan, is still preserved in the Tower of London³,

¹ Rot. Claus. 16^o Joh., p. 171, in the printed Close Rolls. See also Charter Rolls, p. 197 b., and Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. i., pt. i., p. 125.

² MS. 7927, Bib. Royale, fol. 236. Foot-notes supposed to be by Bernard Iterius.

³ Lit. Reg. ap. Turr. Lond., No. 392. A translation is printed in *Letters of Royal and Illustrious Ladies of Great Britain*, vol. i., p. 28. }

and is a most curious specimen of diplomatic skill and woman's *finesse*. The little Joanna was too young to feel the peculiarity of her situation, when she was thus supplanted by her own mother, and the change must have been rather advantageous to her than otherwise; since it placed her under maternal surveillance at a time when her tender age rendered it very desirable for her. Although the object for which the princess had remained in the south was thus unexpectedly frustrated, yet she did not immediately return to England. Queen Isabella, in the letter previously alluded to, requests that a trusty messenger may be forthwith despatched to fetch the princess back; and Henry immediately sent one off with a reply, expressing his satisfaction in his mother's marriage, inviting the Earl of March to visit him in England, and requesting his sister's return¹. This letter was written in 1217, but from some unexplained reason, the messenger was sent back without his charge, and Joanna was detained several years longer abroad.

In the year 1220, however, some negotiations entered into by the young King Henry, or rather by his council of regency, rendered it essential that the princess should be restored. Long and harassing discords had subsisted for some time between England and Scotland, for though the Scotch king, Alexander II. during his father's life-time had received knighthood from the hands of King John, and been otherwise treated by him with great distinction²; yet, during the invasion of Prince Louis of France, in 1216, he joined the French party, and actually did homage to Louis as his rightful lord paramount³. This circumstance naturally led to a serious rupture between the two

¹ Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. i., pt. i., p. 160.

² Fordun's *Scotichronicon*, vol. iii., p. 735. Chron. Lanercost, p. 10. Gray's *Scalachronica*, edited for the Maitland Club by J. Stevenson, Esq., p. 84. Chron. Carlisle, Rymer, *Collectanea*, Addit. MS., No. 4575, f. 458.

³ Paris, vol. i., p. 287.

powers, and the national animosity needed far less provocation to burst into a flame. At length, both sides, weary of strife, became anxious for a peace, which was to be cemented by the union of the King of Scots with the sister of the English monarch. A meeting took place between the two kings at York, in the month of June, 1220¹, when engagements were entered into by both parties, and sworn to with the usual formalities². Letters were forthwith dispatched to the Earl of March, demanding the restoration of Joanna, but this was a point not very easy of accomplishment. Prompted by a desire to secure, by means of so precious a pledge, some important portions of the dowry of his countess-queen, which had been withheld from her, and hoping to extort a ransom from the anxiety of the English court to possess themselves of her person, the earl refused to surrender the young princess. This was the more unreasonable since no demand was made for the return of the two thousand livres which had been given with her, and an open rupture between the king and the earl was the immediate consequence.

Among the invaluable collection of royal letters preserved in the Tower of London, is one written probably at this period, from the Lady Joanna to the king her brother; in which she inquires affectionately after his welfare, and that of her brother Richard, and intreats him not to credit what unfaithful persons may say to him against Hugh de Lusignan, but to give implicit credence to her messengers, who would tell him of her health and welfare, and requesting to have speedy information of his³. This epistle, though not penned with all the formality of a state document, and strongly characteristic of the affectionate gentleness of Joanna's disposition, can scarcely be supposed to have been the free and confidential expression of her

¹ Wallingford's Chron., Harl. MS. 688, f. 17.

² Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. i. pt. i., p. 161.

³ Royal Letters, No. 65. See Append. No. V.

feelings, since she was in all probability a mere tool in the hands of de Lusignan and her mother.

Matters remained for several months *in statu quo*; a frequent correspondence going on meanwhile between the English king and Earl Hugh, the one repeating his demand, and the other his refusal, till at length Henry in his dilemma had recourse to the Pope, Honorius III., to whom he wrote a long letter of complaint, intreating the interference of the ecclesiastical authorities on his behalf. In this letter, as well as in a similar one addressed at the same time to the cardinals, much stress is laid on the contempt poured upon the princess by the rejection of her for the sake of her mother, and Hugh is accused of detaining her purely from a wish to obtain a ransom. Henry requests the Pope to try first exhortation, and if that should fail, to use the sword of the church against this inflexible baron¹. A last effort was also made by an indignant appeal to the honour of the Earl of March, to induce him to yield Joanna into the hands of her brother's commissioners; but this, like all the others, proved unsuccessful.

Pope Honorius, in compliance with the wishes of King Henry, at length interfered, and wrote letters both to Isabella and her husband, threatening Earl Hugh with immediate excommunication in case of non-compliance; and the Bishops of Saintong and Limoges, with the Deacon of Bourdeaux, were appointed as agents of the papal wrath against the refractory noble. Repeated mandates were sent both to them and the Earl, with threats that other agents should be employed in case of their negligence²; and still the design was unaccomplished. The thunders of the Vatican failing to produce any effect, the matter began to assume a very serious aspect; war was menaced on the

¹ Letter to Honorius in Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. i., pt. i., p. 161, sub n. 1220.

² *Epist. Honor. Papæ*, Bouquet, vol. xix., pp. 708-9.

part of England, and the nobles of Bourdeaux, Rochelle, &c., assembled in a body at Angoulême, to remonstrate with the obstinate de Lusignan, and to entreat that, before affairs came to an extremity, ambassadors should be sent to England to try to negotiate the point in dispute¹. This embassy at length succeeded in conciliating the two parties. A promise was made that the young lady, about whom all this tumult had arisen, should be restored, and properly authorized messengers were sent to claim her. They found de Lusignan suffering from illness, in spite of which he contrived to escort the princess from the island of Oleron to a village near Rochelle, where he formally delivered her to her brother's trusty knights. He seems to have been determined to make a merit of necessity at last, for the Dean of Poictou, an eye-witness, speaks in the warmest terms of the courtesy and extreme cordiality of his manners, and of the honourable entertainment he gave to the English messengers². He wrote to King Henry, stating his intention to have escorted Joanna to England himself, had not his indisposition prevented, and to have performed his homage for the lands he held in right of his wife, in that country, provided the consent of the English knights could be obtained that the princess should be taken home by way of the French court³. When she had bid adieu to her step-father, Joanna was forthwith conducted to Rochelle, the magistrates of which had orders to receive her and her attendants, and to provide them with all necessaries⁴. Her stay in Poictou was only short, for a ship was already waiting to convey her to London, where she arrived in the early part of the year 1221. The Close Rolls of the 5th of Henry III. contain orders upon the treasury for sundry payments to be made to different

¹ Lit. Reg. ap. Turr. Lond., No. 946. Appendix, No. VI.

² Lit. Reg. temp. Hen. III., No. 943. See also No. 954.

³ Royal Letters, No. 1014.

⁴ Rot. Claus. 4 Hen. III., p. 425 b.

persons in Rochelle or Poictou for her expenses, and also forty-five marks to Ernald Chateyn for the vessel that brought her over to England¹.

The royal family of England presented at this time a peculiar and unwonted aspect, since after the death of King John and the second marriage of the queen-mother, it consisted entirely of young persons; for although Joanna, who was considerably the senior, had completed her eighteenth year, the king himself was not yet fourteen, Prince Richard was only in his thirteenth year, and their other sisters, Isabella and Eleanora, still younger, without a single relation, either male or female, to assume the office of guardian. That office was however most ably filled by William Marshal, Earl of Pembroke, under whose talented administration every precaution was taken to counteract the evils of a long minority.

After Joanna had remained a short time with her brothers and sisters at London, the royal family removed to Winchester², where preparations were made for their journey to York in the summer.

The Princess Royal seems to have been treated with great respect during her short residence at her brother's court, for we find orders for the payment of ten marks for her robes and other expenses, also for one palfrey and two sumpter-mules purchased for her use ten marks, and for one saddle, &c., ten shillings³. From this it would seem that horsemanship had formed part of the early training of the princess.

It was in the beginning of the month of June, that the court of Henry III. arrived at the ancient city of York, which was the place appointed for the solemnization of the marriage of the young King of Scots with his long-plighted bride, the Lady Joanna. The Archbishop of York with Earl

¹ Printed Close Rolls, pp. 458 b, and 459.

² Rot. Claus., 5^o Hen. III., p. 460.

³ Ibid., p. 459 b.

Warren and several other English lords were dispatched to Berwick to meet the Scotch king, who was attended also by a goodly array of his own nobles, to conduct him southward. They all arrived at York on Monday, the 14th day of June¹. The nuptials were celebrated on the following Friday, the 18th, in presence of King Henry and many nobles from the courts of England and Scotland². Paris³ and Matthew of Westminster⁴, give the 25th of June as the date of this marriage; but an entry in the close rolls of the year, dated on the 21st, containing an order for the payment of expenses incurred in the marriage-feasts on the Wednesday after the octaves of Holy Trinity, and the three subsequent days⁵, proves that it took place a little earlier; and as Trinity Sunday fell this year on the 6th of June, these days of festivity must have been the 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th. The 18th is named by several of the most authentic Scottish historians, as the wedding-day, and it is most probably the true date. There is extant a letter from King Alexander, in which he agrees that the marriage shall be concluded on the Tuesday after Trinity Sunday, but circumstances arose to postpone it a little later⁶.

Alexander granted to his youthful bride letters-patent, by which he conferred upon her an annual revenue of 1000*l.* from lands in Scotland, with full provision for its regular payment, even in case of his own decease⁷. The earldom of Huntingdon, claimed by him as having belonged to his uncle David, was ceded to him as one of the provisos of the marriage-settlement, and a dowry of 5000

¹ Rot. Lib. Claus., 5^o Hen. III., m. 2, in dorso, p. 476.

² Chron. Mailros., Gale, vol. i., p. 198. Fordun, vol. iii., p. 749. Chron. St. Mary Hunt., Rymer, Collect., Addit. MS. 4575, f. 428.

³ Vol. ii., p. 313.

⁴ Book ii., p. 111.

⁵ Rot. Claus., p. 462 b.

⁶ Royal Letters, Tower, No. 842.

⁷ Rot. Lit. Pat. 5^o Hen. III. m. 5 in dorso. Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. i., pt. i., p. 165.

marks was bestowed by King Henry with his sister¹. The money was not however actually paid down, but placed to the account of a debt owed by Alexander to Henry.

After the nuptial festivities were over the courts still remained at York for a few weeks, probably to break the pangs of separation for the young bride, by allowing her time to become habituated to her new position before she was parted from her own relatives. It was not till the 4th of August that Alexander arrived with his queen at Roxburgh², where they were received amidst great rejoicings³.

It was easy to foresee that there was much in the position of the young English maiden calculated to interfere materially with her happiness. The Scots had at that period scarcely emerged from a state of barbarism, and must have presented a strong contrast to the comparatively polished Provençals, among whom her girlhood had been spent; and their native fierceness, combined with their feelings of exasperation against the English, the result of a long succession of hostilities, rendered it no desirable thing for any one of that nation to attempt a residence amongst them⁴. The exchequer of the sovereign too was at that time in so low a condition, that Alexander was indebted to his royal brother-in-law for the discharge of his expenses on his way to York, and all the bridal ceremonies were paid for out of the English treasury. The

¹ Chron. Dunstaple, vol. i., p. 94.

² Balfour's Scotland, vol. i., p. 42.

³ A rude sketch of this marriage is drawn on the margin of one of the leaves of the Cotton. MS., Nero, A. iv., fol. 109 b. The bride is juvenile in her aspect, dressed in robes of flaming red with the matronly wimple and hood.

⁴ A curious instance of the dread felt by many of the English to venture into Scotland is recorded in the Fine Rolls of the 7th of King John, memb. 8, p. 334, in the volume of printed Fine Rolls. William de Breos gives ten bulls and ten cows, that he may not have to go into Scotland to bring the King of Scots to my lord the king.

close-rolls for this year contain orders for the payment of 15*l.* to the Viscount of Northumberland, for the expenses incurred by the Scotch king in passing through that country on his way to York¹, and of 63*l.* 15*s.* 2*d.* to the civic authorities of York, who had provided the marriage feasts².

The two elder sisters of Alexander, who had formerly been placed in the hands of the late King of England as hostages³, were to be handsomely provided for by marriage by Henry, and their brother succeeded in levying an aid of 10,000 pounds Scots to pay their marriage portions⁴. The elder of them was accordingly wedded shortly afterwards to Hubert de Burgh, Justiciary of England⁵, and the younger was betrothed to Roger Bigod, Earl of Norfolk; but she, along with her plighted lord, who was not yet of age, resided in the court of Alexander until they were old enough to be married⁶. The wardship of a minor who was heir to large estates was a matter of importance, since it gave to the guardian a right over the revenues and person of the heir, and as such was often made the subject of much litigation; and that of the young Earl of Norfolk, which Henry conferred on his brother-in-law, came in very opportunely to aid the fortunes of the Scotch king⁷. Its value may be estimated by the fact that Alexander had to pay for it

¹ P. 462, printed Close Rolls.

² Rot. Claus., 5^o Hen. III., p. 462 b. The cost of Alexander's former visit had also been defrayed by King Henry, for there is an entry in the Close Rolls of 15*l.* paid to Philip Ulecot for his expenses in Northumberland, p. 420.

³ Many entries relative to their expenditure occur on the Close Rolls of King John, and also in a wardrobe account of the 14th of John, which has recently been discovered in excellent preservation, in the Chapter-house, Westminster. It contains also several curious entries relating to the king, the queen, and the princes Henry and Richard. Miscel. Documents, temp. John, No. 3.

⁴ Hailes' Annals, p. 149.

⁵ Chron. Mailros, Gale, vol. i., p. 198.

⁶ Patent Roll, 9th Hen. III., mm. 5, 4. Chron. Mailros, p. 141, printed for the Bannatyne Club. Balfour's Annals, p. 42.

⁷ Rot. Claus., 10^o Hen. III., m. 1.

500 marks, a sum equivalent to 5000*l.* of our present money.

At the time of their marriage Joanna's husband was in the prime of life, having recently completed his twenty-fourth year¹, and he was energetically occupied in prosecuting that plan of vigorous rule which alone enabled him to maintain a semblance of order among the turbulent barons by whom he was surrounded; but his enterprising disposition had well nigh left Joanna a widow the very year subsequently, for having gone on an expedition to subdue a revolt among the wild classes of the north, on his return homewards a sudden storm arising, scattered his fleet, and wrecked many of the vessels, the monarch landing almost alone at the harbour of Glasgow.

Ceaseless disorders amongst his rebel subjects did not permit Alexander to enjoy in peace much of the society of his young queen, whose increasing beauty and sweetness of disposition greatly endeared her to him²; but unwilling to relinquish her companionship, and perhaps also in the hope of improving her health, which had been somewhat impaired by change of climate, he took her with him in his several progresses to administer justice in his kingdom³. They chanced to be at Forfar on the birthday of the king, which was celebrated in that town with more than ordinary ceremony⁴.

Full scope was afforded during these journeys for all Alexander's talents, and more than all his power. A fearful instance of the murderous recklessness of the Scotch nobles occurred at this time. The Bishop of Caithness, a prelate zealous for the honour of the church, had enforced its rights, especially as regarded the collection of tithes, with a rigour which they deeply resented: they rose up in opposition, and the venerable bishop was cruelly murdered

¹ Fordun, vol. iii., p. 754. Chron. Lanercost, p. 11.

² Chron. Lanercost, p. 29. Fordun, ut supra.

³ Buchanan, p. 187.

⁴ Balfour's Scot., vol. i., p. 43.

in cold blood. At the time when this outrage was perpetrated, Alexander was on his way to England. His indignation was roused: he returned in all haste, collected his troops, and proceeded in person to the disturbed provinces to avenge the murder; but although the immediate agents were severely punished, the Earl of Caithness, who was suspected to be at the bottom of the conspiracy, was too powerful for the king to venture to attack him, and the following Christmas, policy compelled Alexander to grant him a pardon¹. The spirit which the monarch had evinced in thus warmly espousing the quarrels of the church was so pleasing to Pope Honorius, that he wrote a letter, dated February 13th, 1223, congratulating the bishops of Scotland on their possessing such a sovereign².

After the period of Joanna's marriage a constant and friendly intercourse was kept up between England and Scotland, and the young king and queen were frequent visitors at the court of their royal brother, as appears from the constant recurrence of safe-conducts, &c. for them. In the year 1223, Alexander accompanied the queen's younger brother, Richard, Earl of Cornwall, on a pilgrimage to Canterbury, but since Joanna is not mentioned as sharing his devotions, she probably remained at the English court. The following year 1224, Alexander was present at a parliament held at Worcester, but his queen does not seem to have accompanied him³. The most frequent place of meeting of the royal families of England and Scotland was the city of York, on account of its being about equally distant from the residences of both.

The good effects of this peaceful intercourse were soon apparent. The border countries, which as usual had shared largely in the miseries of war, and about which so many disputes had arisen, were restored by both countries pre-

¹ Fordun, vol. iii., pp. 750-1.

² Raynaldus, *Annal. Eccles.*, vol. i., p. 526.

³ *Chron. Mon. Wigorn.*, Cotton. MS., Vesp., A. ii., fol. 54.

cisely as they had formerly been held by each, and the commerce of Scotland, which had been fettered and almost destroyed by the naval superiority of her rival, resumed its former activity. Repeated orders occur in the close-rolls of this period¹ that the goods and merchandize of the King of Scots should be allowed to pass free and unmolested, in spite of former commands to the contrary. The revenues of King Alexander were so greatly increased by these favourable circumstances, combined with his own prudent economy, that he was able to come forward to the assistance of his profuse and improvident brother-in-law Henry III., and both the English king and his brother Richard² were indebted to Alexander for considerable pecuniary aid, especially during the Gascon war³.

The extreme paucity of the Scottish chronicles, and the utter want of records of Scotland at so early a period, render it impossible to trace out with anything like accuracy the domestic history of the young queen of Alexander II. during her residence in that kingdom. It is to the information furnished by our English historians, and to our English state documents, that we are almost exclusively indebted for the scanty particulars which can be gleaned with reference to her.

With politics Joanna did not often intermeddle, and when she did so, it was in a manner true to her amiable character. A letter to her brother still exists, written in the year 1225⁴, in which she acknowledges the receipt of a letter from him, and expresses her regret at the intelligence therein contained of the annoyance given by Hugh de Lacey to his subjects in Ireland. She expresses a hope

¹ Printed Close Rolls, pp. 558 b, 600 b, 646 b.

² Rot. Pat., 9° Hen. III., m. 3.

³ Rot. Pat., 14°, pt. 2, mm. 5 et 21, 15° Hen. III., m. 7. Rot. Lit., 14° Hen. III., m. 1.

⁴ This appears, from the mention of Lacey's rebellion, which, according to the Chronicle of Dunstaple, vol. i., p. 140, took place in that year. The letter itself is without date.

that these disturbances will speedily be put a stop to, since the King of Scotland has promised her that any soldier, horse or foot, who should go to Ireland from Scotland to injure King Henry's subjects should be punished. She concludes by informing him of a design on the part of the King of Norway to land in Ireland the following summer to assist De Lacey¹.

From the tenor of the letter, it would seem that Henry had felt some jealousy lest his brother of Scotland were privately fomenting this rebellion; but if so, the mediation of the gentle peace-maker seems to have proved entirely successful, for we hear of no farther unpleasantness arising on the same score between the two monarchs.

The following year, 1226, Joanna received a visit from her brother Richard, Earl of Cornwall, which had nearly been productive of unpleasant consequences; for the prince, paying a visit of courtesy to the dowager-queen Ermen-garde, Alexander's mother, who resided with her younger daughter at Ringhorne Castle, became violently enamoured of the princess, and was anxious to obtain her for his wife; but this romantic passion of a boy of eighteen was strenuously opposed by the council of regency, and the prince was persuaded or compelled to relinquish his ladye love², doubtless to the disappointment of Alexander, who would thus have had his sister comfortably provided for.

This circumstance probably produced a temporary coolness between the royal families of England and Scotland, for they do not seem to have met again until the Christmas of the year 1229, which they spent together at the city of York, where the archbishop provided splendid entertainments for both courts, and when they broke up, presented magnificent gifts to the two kings³. King

¹ *Literæ Regum*, ap. Turr. Lond., No. 850, Append. No. VII. See also *Lit. Reg.*, No. 833.

² Balfour, vol. i., p. 45.

³ Cotton. MS., Claudius, D. vi., f. 61. Rot. Pat., 14^o Hen. III., m. 7.

Henry also made his brother-in-law many rich presents¹.

It seems very doubtful whether, notwithstanding the attachment of her husband, Joanna's married life was happy. The constant perils which the king incurred in his attempts to curb the lawless violence of his nobles, must have caused frequent apprehensions for his safety; and during his warlike expeditions the situation of the queen, left among a people to whom the very epithet of English was a term of reproach, cannot have been very pleasant. Her female companions were the queen-mother Ermengarde², who lived till about the year 1233, and the sisters of Alexander, the two eldest of whom, Isabella and Margaret, notwithstanding their English marriages, spent much of their time at his court³, and the youngest, Marjory or Marion, was exclusively under his care, until her marriage in 1235⁴.

The queen herself does not appear to have been popular with the nation: it would require much to reconcile a great majority of the reckless spirits, in whom old feelings of national hatred were still deeply rooted, to an English princess, and Joanna's timid shrinking character and delicate health were ill suited to their rough temperament: in addition to these causes of unpopularity, no heir to the throne of Scotland blessed the union of the royal pair.

It cannot be wondered at that, under such circumstances, Joanna should have looked forward to her visits to England as the sunny spots of her existence, and that she should have availed herself of every opportunity to repeat them, especially after the court of her brother Henry III. became enlivened by the presence of his beautiful queen, Eleanor

¹ Hailes' Annals, p. 150.

² Chron. Mail., Gale, p. 201. Liber Sanctæ Mariæ de Balmerinock, p. 7.

³ Johannes Major, de Gestis Scottorum, p. 148. Chron. Mailr., Bannat. edit., p. 141.

⁴ Balfour, vol. i., p. 50.

of Provence, between whom and Queen Joanna the most friendly feeling subsisted. Henry always entertained a sincere affection for his sister, of which he gave substantial proof by conferring the manor of Staunton, and afterwards that of Driffeld, upon her for life, with the provision that she should be allowed to dispose of the revenues by will for two years after her death¹.

The value of these manors was about 115*l.* a-year, as appears from a negotiation subsequently entered into between the king and Joanna's executors in which the revenues for the two years were commuted for the sum of 230*l.*²

A letter of King Henry to Joanna, dated February 24th, 1235, is still extant, written to inform her of the marriage of their sister, the Princess Isabella; it is couched in the most affectionate terms, and alludes to the warm interest ever taken by Joanna in all that concerned the welfare of her own family³.

The year 1235 was signalized by one of those desperate conflicts which so strongly mark the character of the Scotch at this period. The powerful Lord of Galway had died without legitimate male heir, and Alexander, with the true policy of a monarch who has an over-powerful aristocracy to contend with,—that of dividing a strength which he cannot conquer,—eagerly supported the claims of his three daughters to share their father's inheritance, against those of his bastard son. The latter, however, was enthusiastically seconded by the wild clans, who scorned to brook a female sway; they took a solemn oath together, pledging each other in true barbaric fashion in a draught of blood, that they would stand firm against the interference

¹ Close Rolls 18th, mm. 2, 3, 7, 20; Patent 19th, m. 14; and Charters 19th, m. 17 and 20th, m. 2 of Hen. III. Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. i., pt. 1, p. 230.

² Rot. Liberat., 22° Hen. III., m. 4.

³ Close Roll, 19 Hen. III., pt. 1, m. 19, printed in Rymer, vol. i., pt. 1, p. 224, but under a wrong date.

of the king¹, and open warfare was the consequence. After having narrowly escaped a sudden attack of the rebels who assailed him in his tent, Alexander at length succeeded in defeating them and taking their chief prisoner. The king publicly, in the midst of his soldiers, returned thanks to the God of armies for his victory, but his troops were far from being inspired with the same religious sentiments. Flushed with conquest, they inflicted the most fearful ravages on the unfortunate Galwegians, laying waste their lands, robbing the churches, and even a monk who was performing the last offices for a dying person was stripped by the merciless troops; and although the king made strenuous efforts to put a stop to this atrocious cruelty, they were of no avail². Alexander, by the general tenor of his conduct, showed that he was far in advance of his subjects in the scale of civilization. In all probability his frequent association with the comparatively refined court of Henry III., joined to the influence of his queen, contributed much to this end; but his mind was naturally vigorous, and he possessed that clear-sighted policy which would have enabled him to execute many valuable improvements, had he not been constantly thwarted by those restless nobles whom it was his grand aim to restrain and control.

In the same year, 1235, was also celebrated the wedding of Alexander's youngest sister with Gilbert Marshal, Earl of Pembroke. It is probable that the connexion was formed when the Scotch princess accompanied her sister-in-law Queen Joanna on one of her visits to England. The nuptials were solemnized at the border town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, and honoured by the presence of Alexander and his queen, and many noble lords and ladies both of England and Scotland³. The year following a

¹ Paris, vol. ii., p. 430.

² Fordun's *Scotichronicon*, vol. iii., p. 753. Chron. Lanercost, p. 42. Paris, vol. ii., p. 430.

³ Chron. Mailros, Bannatyne edit., p. 147.

meeting took place at Newcastle between the kings of England and Scotland to consult together about state affairs but the queens are not mentioned as being of the party. It was probably on this occasion that Alexander interposed his mediation, which was attended with temporary success, in settling the disputes that were already arising between King Henry and his barons¹. They feasted royally together, and then departed in great love and amity².

The latter part of the year was spent by Joanna and her husband at the English court³, in compliance with a pressing invitation from Henry that his sister would pay him a visit. They were received with more than ordinary ceremony by the king. He wrote a letter to the Archbishop of York, informing him of the approaching visit of Alexander and "our very dear sister, Joanna, his wife; and since it is by no means proper that they should approach us without a solemn escort, we beseech your paternity to meet our said sister at the time and place which Bartholomew Peck, whom we sent to request her to honour us with her presence, shall acquaint you with, and conduct her to us to our city of London⁴." A meeting of the English nobility was also appointed to do honour to the occasion, which was rendered the more festive by the rejoicings attendant on the recent marriage of the Princess Isabella, Joanna's younger sister, with the Emperor Frederic.

The following year, 1237, the good understanding between the courts of England and Scotland was slightly broken in upon by a demand of Alexander for the county of Northumberland, which he pretended had been granted him as the dowry of Queen Joanna. The Scotch king cannot in this instance be freed from the charge of un-

¹ Ballenden's Boethius, fol. 986. Balfour, vol. i., p. 51.

² Balfour's Scotland, vol. i., p. 50. Hailes' Annals, p. 153.

³ Chron. Wigorn, Cotton. MS., Vesp., A. ii., f. 56. Rot. Claus., 2^o Hen. III., m. 13, dorso.

⁴ Rymer's Fœdera, vol. i., p. 221.

generousness; for this claim upon his royal brother-in-law, after having lain dormant during the first fifteen years of his wedded life, was urged just at a period when the contentions between King Henry and his own subjects rendered it impossible for him to offer any effectual resistance.

Amidst the various opinions of contending parties about what might be truly called the *debateable land*, it is impracticable now to ascertain where the right lay. An entry in the charter-roll of the fifteenth of Henry III.¹ seems to give some colour to Alexander's pretensions, for in it Henry confirms the grant of Tynedale which had been made three years previously by Alexander to his younger sister Margaret, thereby acknowledging the right of the Scotch king to that part of Northumberland. Unwilling, however, to violate the boundaries of his kingdom by giving up any part of this northern county, King Henry entered into a compromise by which he agreed to pay Alexander eighty marks yearly, in lieu of his claims upon the disputed territory. Still the King of Scotland was dissatisfied, and the next year a grand meeting was appointed to take place between him and Henry at York, to which all the principal English nobles were summoned, in order that by their mediation and that of Otho, the Pope's legate, some arrangement might be concluded between the two monarchs. This was the more difficult since Alexander had now extended his demands to the adjoining counties of Cumberland and Westmoreland². The claims were strenuously urged on both sides, and fifteen days were employed in the discussion³. It was however of the greatest importance to the integrity of England as a kingdom that no concessions should be made to the Scotch on the borders, because such territory would necessarily in course of time be considered as an integral part of Scotland itself; but the surrender of

¹ Membrane 12.

² Rot. Pat., 21^o Hen. III., m. 2.

³ Fordun, vol. iii., p. 754.

lands to the value of 200*l.* per annum was made by King Henry to his powerful rival, in order to satisfy him¹. He also obtained the earldom of Chester, which had formerly belonged to the royal family of Scotland, and had become vacant by the decease of the last earl².

On this occasion, the legate Otho, who had exercised largely his prerogative of fleecing the English clergy, was extremely anxious to extend his good offices to Scotland, and to accompany Alexander on his return to his own country; but the king wrought so powerfully upon his fears, by representing to him in vivid colours the savage and uncontrollable temper of the Scots, their love of slaughter, and his own inability to restrain them, that Otho consented to abide with the English monarch³.

The part which her lord had lately taken in reference to her brother appears to have greatly harassed and grieved the Scottish queen, and to have had the effect of making her cling with still fonder affection to her own relations. She had accompanied her husband to York, and after the conference broke up, she prevailed upon her sister-in-law, Queen Eleanora, to return with her to Scotland for a short visit⁴; at the close of which, she obtained permission from her husband to return with the queen to her brother's court, under pretence of making a pilgrimage to the shrine of Thomas-à-Becket, in company with her sister-in-law. To this Alexander consented, and bade farewell to his wife, whom he was never again destined to see.

The two queens forthwith commenced their journey southward, and having reached Canterbury in safety, they paid their devotions and offerings at the altar of the ambitious prelate, whose talents and crimes had procured

¹ Rot. Pat., 21^o Hen. III., memb. 2, dorso. *Fœdera*, vol. i., pt. i., p. 233. Paris by mistake calls it 300*l.*; see vol. ii., p. 446.

² Rot. Claus., 21^o Hen. III., m. 12 et m. 11 in dorso.

³ Paris, vol. ii., p. 446. Buchanan, p. 187.

⁴ Balfour's *Annals*, p. 51.

for him the fate and the reputation of a martyr. The immediate object of their pilgrimage is not stated, but it was probably to supplicate for the restoration of the health of the Queen of Scots, which had long been in a declining state. After their devotions were duly performed, they proceeded to London, where in the Tower, the old palace of Westminster, or the summer park of Woodstock, they spent their time, as time was spent, in the pleasure-loving court of Henry III. and his beautiful Provençal queen, without any effort on the part of Joanna to return to her own dominions, or any attempt on that of her lord to recal her. In all probability it was her failing health that thus detained her in England; but no precautions were able to avert the insidious attacks of the malady, a lingering decline, which was preying upon her constitution. When she felt her end approaching, she appears to have been seized with a desire once more to see her husband, and as he did not visit his dying wife, she made arrangements for returning to Scotland.

On the 23rd of January, 1238, 26*l.* were given by King Henry for her travelling expenses¹; but a long and tedious journey in the depth of winter, for a delicate female in the later stage of a consumption, was found to be utterly impracticable; and after proceeding a short distance, increasing illness arrested her course, and compelled her return. The hand of fond affection smoothed her passage to the tomb, and every attention that sympathizing love could suggest was paid to her².

She was tenderly watched in her last moments by her brothers King Henry and Richard, Earl of Cornwall³; and, after having received the sacraments of the church, she expired in their arms on the 12th of March, in the year

¹ Rot. Lib., 22° Hen. III., m. 8.

² Besides the usual presents of wine and deer for her use, in little more than a month, orders for 40*l.*, and again for 100 marks, were issued in her behalf.

³ Johan. Maj., p. 148.

1238¹. Her body was conveyed, according to her own request, to the nunnery of Tarente in Dorsetshire², where she was interred with all due honours by her sorrowing relatives.

During the progress of the royal remains from London to Dorsetshire, offerings of altar-cloths were made at every church or monastery where they rested: those for the cathedrals and abbeyes were of rich silk woven with gold, and for the minor churches of arras silk: they were twenty-six in number, and purchased by the king at the total cost of 19*l.* 18*s.*, equal to nearly 300*l.* of our present money.

A marble tomb was also ordered to be made at Sarum by one Master Chase of Dereham³, to place over the remains of the princess-queen at Tarente, as the last pledge of mourning affection, and two wax tapers were kept continually burning, one before the high altar, and the other upon her tomb⁴.

The monastic establishment of Tarente, though not originally a royal foundation, was under the special patronage of the king and also of Queen Eleanora, whose benefactions to it were so liberal, that she was afterwards spoken of as its foundress⁵; and Joanna in her last will, bestowed upon it one hundred and twelve acres of land from her manor of Staunton, with several other pecuniary privileges, and she also commanded that her remains should be there deposited⁶. It is uncertain whether the queen made this will before her last journey into England; the delicacy of

¹ Paris, vol. ii., p. 468. Fordun, vol. iii., p. 754. Chron. Mailros, Gale, vol. i., p. 204. M. Westm., book ii., p. 147. Rot. Lib., 22° Hen. III., m. 7.

² M. Westm., ut supra. Dugdale's Monasticon, vol. v., p. 619. Paris, ut supra. Chron. Mailros, p. 204.

³ Rot. Lib., 22° Hen. III., m. 5.

⁴ Ibid., 35° Hen. III., m. 7.

⁵ Liberate Roll, 24 Hen. III., m. 17, and 25 Hen. III., mm. 9 and 17. Close Roll, 27 Hen. III., m. 1, 36 Hen. III., m. 10, &c.

⁶ Dugdale's Monasticon, vol. v., p. 621.

her health during her later years, must have occasioned anticipations of her early fate, and her clinging attachment to England rendered her anxious to find a last resting-place there, rather than among the tombs of the princely race of that country over which she was so long queen. The nuns of Tarente, grateful for the honour thus bestowed upon them, gave the name of "*locus benedictus sanctæ reginæ*,"—"the blessed place of the holy queen," to their monastery, ever after it became the repository of the royal remains¹; but not a fragment of the building is now to be traced. It had disappeared before the English Reformation, for Leland, the antiquary, librarian of Henry VIII., speaks of it as having *lately stood*².

Queen Joanna was not more than thirty-five or thirty-six years of age when death so prematurely terminated her existence. Several circumstances concur to give rise to the opinion, that towards the close of her life, her devotion to the interests of her brother had produced a temporary estrangement between herself and her husband. We find, from a notice in the patent rolls of this year, that at her late visit to York, she had brought with her many of her valuables, and deposited them in the hands of the monks of St. Mary, probably with the design that in case of her remaining in England, they might be at her own command, independently of her husband, or that in case of her death they might revert to her brother King Henry, which they accordingly did, and were disposed of by him, along with her other property, which after her

¹ Monast. Anglic., vol. v., p. 619. The patent-rolls of the 8th of Edward I. and 48th of Edward III. are the authorities quoted in the Monasticon; but on an examination of those rolls, for the purpose of verifying the references, we have failed to discover any entry for the nunnery of Tarente. In the patent of the 25th of Henry III., membrane 26, Tarente is named as "*locus beatæ Mariæ, et sanctæ benedicti loci reginæ super Tarentam*."

² Leland's Itinerary, vol. vi., p. 51.

decease was yielded up by Alexander to the English king¹.

Though the amiable character of Joanna, and the strong attachment which subsisted between her and her own family must have rendered her early death a matter of sincere regret to them, yet it would not seem that these sentiments were very largely participated in by her lord. The strong leaning on the part of the Scottish monarch during the last few years to a line of policy unfavourable to England, would naturally lessen his sorrow at being deprived of a queen whose feelings and influence were so decidedly English, especially since he had ceased to hope that she would present him with an heir to the crown.

Several of the ancient chroniclers concur in their testimony as to the deterioration of Alexander's character during the latter years of his life. His noble spirit, checked and thwarted on every side by the rude, stern, semi-barbarians who surrounded him, took a tone of moroseness and selfishness, and the close of his reign was marked by a grasping covetousness wholly opposed to his early character, when the influence of his English queen was exercised over him². Scarcely a year had elapsed after the death of Queen Joanna, before Alexander became a second time a husband. The beautiful and accomplished Lady Mary de Coucy, a daughter of one of the proudest and most ancient houses of French nobility, was the object of his second choice, and she gave birth to his son and heir Prince Alexander³. Her influence was of

¹ Rot. Pat., 22° Hen. III., m. 2.

² Paris, vol. ii., p. 770. Joh. Maj., p. 148.

³ Fordun, vol. iii., p. 754. Buchanan, p. 188. The chronicle of Lanercost (p. 49) repeats a legend with reference to Alexander strongly characteristic of the times. A short time after the birth of the infant prince, as the monarch was riding from his castle of Edinburgh, an aged woman carrying a bundle of dry sticks met him, and seizing his bridle, bitterly reproached him with her misfortunes, telling him that through the extortion of his servants she had been reduced from affluence to the utmost poverty, that one single hen, her sole remaining riches, had

course thrown into the French scale, and the latter part of her husband's reign was spent in perpetual contests with England.

King Alexander II. did not reach a mature old age. He expired in the remote island of Kerner, one of the Hebrides, whither he had gone to extort the homage of some of the chiefs, who had revolted in favour of the crown of Norway. His death took place in the year 1249, the forty-eight of his age, and thirty-third of his reign¹. His young son Alexander III. was left a minor under the tutelage of the queen-mother Mary de Coucy. Of this king we shall have again occasion to speak, as the spouse of another princess of England.

that morning been taken from her, and that those sticks were all that were now left her. Alexander, struck with the earnest and haggard look of the woman, and conscious how much of truth there might be in her statement, hastily promised redress, and striking his spurs into his steed, endeavoured to escape her, but with frenzied wildness she cursed him in the most passionate manner, wishing him as much joy of his new-born son as she had of her hen, at the instant when, by the cruelty of the king's officers, its neck was wrung off before her eyes. A mysterious power was in those days attributed to the magic incantations of old women, and Alexander, terrified at her words, lifted up his hands to heaven, and earnestly deprecated the fulfilment of her imprecations. But the death of the king, which happened only a few years afterwards, was ascribed by the superstition of the times to the withering effect of these curses.

¹ Chron. Lanercost, p. 55. Chron. Mailros, p. 178.

APPENDIX.

NUMBER I.—*See page 12.*

As this charter has not appeared in print, it is thought advisable to give the original, which is extracted from the Chartulary of Caen, MS. No. 5650, folio 88, Bibliothèque du Roi, Paris.

Cecilia, filia regis, Dei gratia abbatissa Sanctæ Trinitatis Cadomi, presentibus et futuris ad quos litteræ istæ pervenerint salutem. Sciatis quòd ego concessi Erengot molendinario ducere et facere molendinum nostrum, qui erat in Frigidovico, super terram suam in Gamara. Et Erengot crevit nobis redditum molendini de uno modio frumenti et de uno modio ordeï. Et sciendum quod molendinum non reddebat antè nisi duos modios nostræ abbatiae. Et sic concessimus ei molendinum, tenendum in feodo hereditariè sibi et heredibus suis. Ego feci molendinum de meis lignis et refacere debeo quandò deterioraverit. Bladium de abbatiâ nostrâ debet moliri ad molendinum, et Erengot et heredes ejus habebunt de nostro bladio tredecimum sextarium de moutura, et ei computabitur in suo redditu cum dicâ. Hoc totum factum est concessu Ivonis Taillebosch, salvo suo redditu.

NUMBER II.—*See page 14.*

The confused and contradictory accounts given by our modern genealogists, and even by the ancient chroniclers themselves, of the names, relative ages, and histories of the two unmarried daughters of William the Conqueror, have rendered it a difficult task to attempt to harmonize them. The statements in the text have been drawn up with care; still as they can only be considered in the light of hypotheses, they are offered with diffidence, and for the sake of those readers who are curious in antiquarian matters, the authorities on which they are founded are superadded, together with the reasons that have induced their adoption. Passing by the whole host of later historians,

almost every one of whom has a separate theory of his own on the subject, we revert to the three original chroniclers whose testimony can alone be considered valid.

“Filiæ ipsius (*i. e.*, Gulielmi conquestoris) prima Cæcilia, &c.—altera Constantia, &c.—tertia Adala, &c.—Duarum aliarum nomina exciderunt; unius quæ Haroldo (ut diximus) promissa, infra maturos conjugii annos obiit; alterius quæ Aldefonso Gallicie regi per nuncios jurata virgineam mortem impetravit à Domino. Repertus in defunctæ genibus callus, crebrarum ejus orationum index fuit.”—*Gul. Malmsburiensis, Scriptores post Bedam*, p. 111.

“Porro Agatha regis filia, quæ prius fuerat Haroldo desponsata, postmodo Amfurcio regi Gallicie, per procos petenti, missa est desponsanda. Sed quæ priori sponso ad votum gavisæ non est, secundo sociari valde abominavit. Anglum viderat et dilexerat. Sed Hiberno conjungi nimis metuit, quem nunquam prospexerat. Omnipotenti ergo effudit precem lacrymosam, ne duceretur ipsa in Hispaniam, sed ipse potius susciperet eam. Oravit et exaudita est; obiterque virgo defuncta est. Deinde corpus ejus ad natale solum a ductoribus relatum est et in Ecclesiâ Sanctæ Mariæ perpetuæ virginis in urbe Bajorenci sepultum est. Adelidis, pulcherrima virgo jam nubilis, devotè Deo se commendavit et sub tutelâ Rogerii de Bellomonte sancto fine quievit.”—*Ordericus Vitalis*, p. 605, *Bouquet*, vol. xii.

“Tertia vero filiarum Willelmi regis, Adelidis, proditori ante bellum Anglicum sponsata, sed illo, dignâ morte, mulctato, nulli nupta, virgo jam nubilis obiit.”—*Gul. Gemeticensis*, p. 582, *Bouquet*, vol. xii.

To these may be added the testimony of Benoit, though by no means of equal weight.

Aeliz la tierce soror
Pucele de mult grant valor
Fu au rei Harant mariée
Mais virgine fu morte et finée.

Harl. M.S., No. 1717, f. 249, col. 1.

With reference to the princess who was betrothed to Harold, the testimony of Ordericus is at variance with that of the other three chroniclers, but to us it seems to bear its own confutation in itself. Even supposing her to have been the third child of William and Matilda, she must have been very young in 1062, when Harold paid his visit to Normandy, and that a child should have imbibed an attachment so passionate towards a man whom she never saw again, and who soon afterwards became the husband of another, is incredible. Again, when Duke William reproached Harold for the breach of his oath to his daughter, her death was pleaded in excuse; from

which it is evident that the princess to whom Harold was actually plighted had died before the Conquest, though Duke William considered the engagement still binding, since he had other daughters to bestow.—*Gul. Malmsb.*, p. 408; *John Pike's Chron.*, *Harl. MS.* 685, ff. 116 b, 117. On these grounds we presume that Ordericus has confounded the two princesses, and that Gulielmus Gemeticensis is correct in naming Adelaide as the betrothed of Harold. The account which Ordericus gives of the Princess Agatha may, however, be true in the main, if we substitute the name of Edwin for that of Harold in her early betrothal. No historian has told us which of King William's daughters was plighted to this earl, but it is likely that he and not Harold was the Saxon lover to whose memory Agatha is said to have clung with such fond tenacity.

It will be observed that the name of Agatha is given by Ordericus Vitalis alone, and presumptive evidence exists that it is a misnomer. The Conqueror certainly had a daughter Matilda, who is named in *Domesday Book*, vol. i. p. 49, and by Mabillon, in a valuable document printed in his *Annals of St. Benedict*, vol. v., p. 576, and referred to in p. 10 of the present volume, although, under that name at least, she has been entirely passed over by all our historians and genealogists.—See *Ellis' Introduction to Domesday Book*, vol. i., p. 322. But the names of Cæcilia, Constance, and Adela, rest on too strong authority to be questioned. That of Adelaide is given by Gulielmus Gemeticensis and Ordericus Vitalis, as well as in the document printed by Mabillon, and therefore it seems fair to conclude that the name of the only remaining princess was not Agatha but Matilda. On the point of seniority, the authority of the chroniclers cannot be considered conclusive, as no two of them are agreed; and Ordericus himself places them in different order every time he enumerates them. Arguing from probabilities, we have placed Adelaide, who was plighted to Harold, the *second*, and Matilda, the betrothed of Earl Edwin, the *third* in the list; because, great as must have been the discrepancy in age between these Saxon earls and the juvenile Norman princesses, it is improbable that William would offer either of them a younger daughter whilst he had an elder disposable, and this arrangement is authorized by the order in which their names occur in the only authentic document where even a partial list of them is preserved in Mabillon, vol. v., p. 576. The prayers of the faithful are there requested by the nuns of the Holy Trinity at Caen, for the soul of Queen Matilda their foundress, and of Adelaide, *Matilda* and Constance, her three daughters who had died before 1112, the date of the document in question.

NUMBER III.—*See page 141.*

M. Imperatrix, H. regis filia et Anglorum Regina, Archiepiscopis, Episcopis, Abbatibus, Comitibus, Baronibus, Vicecomitibus, Ministris et omnibus fidelibus Francis et Anglis totius Angliæ salutem. Sciatis me dedisse et concessisse Deo et sanctæ Mariæ de Rading et monachis ibidem Deo servientibus, pro salute animæ meæ et pro animâ H. regis patris mei, et pro incolumitate G. Andegavorum Comitibus et domini H. filii mei et aliorum filiorum meorum, et pro statu totius regni, terram de Windesor et de Kateshill in perpetuam elemosynam, quæ fuit Ganfridi Purcell, quam monasterio Radingi dedit quando ibi monachus devenit. Quare volo et firmiter precipio quòd benè et in pace et liberè et quietè et honorificè et plenariè teneant in bosco et plano et pratis et pasturis; in aquis et stagnis et molendinis; in civitate et extrà et in omnibus rebus et locis et cum omnibus libertatibus et quietantiis ad terram illam pertinentibus.—*From the Chartulary of Reading Monastery, Harleian MS., 1708, fol. 176.*

NUMBER IV.—*See page 148.*

The present copy is made from a careful collation of the two MSS., the one in the Camden Collectanea, Lansdowne MS., No. 229, ff. 110, 111, the other Sir William Dugdale's transcript amongst the Ashmolean MSS., Oxford.

That which seemed the correct reading has been adopted, but every variation of the slightest consequence is given in the notes, C. referring to the Camden, and D. to the Dugdale transcript.

M. Imperatrix, H. regis filia et Anglorum Domina, Archiepiscopis, Episcopis, Abbatibus, Comitibus, Baronibus, Justiciariis Vicecomitibus, Ministris, et omnibus fidelibus suis Francis et Anglis totius Angliæ et Normanniæ salutem. Sciatis me reddidisse et concessisse Comiti Gaufrido Essexæ (*sic*) omnia tenementa sua, sicut Gaufredus avus suus¹, aut Willielmus pater ejus, aut ipsemet postea unquam meliùs vel liberiùs tenuerunt, aliquo tempore, in feodo et hæreditate, sibi et hæredibus suis, ad tenendum de me et de hæredibus meis. Videlicet in terris et turribus, in Castellis et Baillis; et nominatim turrim Lundoniæ cum Castello quod subtus est, ad firmandum et efforciandum ad voluntatem suam. Et Vicecomitatum Lundoniæ et Middlesexiæ per ccc. libras, sicut Gaufredus avus ejus tenuit. (Et vicecomitatum Essex per ccc. libras, sicut idem Gaufridus avus ejus

¹ Suus omitted, the word meus erased. D.

tenuit².) Et vicecomitatum de Hortfordscire per lx. libras, sicut avus ejus tenuit. Et præter hoc do et concedo eidem Ganfredo quod habeat hæreditabiliter Justiciam Lundoniæ et Middlesex et Essex et de Herefordscire, ita quod nulla alia justicia placitet in hiis supradictis vicecomitatibus³, nisi per eis. Et concedo ei, ut⁴ habeat illas c. libratas terræ quas dedi ei, et servitium illorum xx. militum, sicut illud ei dedi et per aliam cartam meam confirmavi. Et illas cc. libratas terræ quas Rex Stephanus et Matildis regina ei dederunt. Et illas c. libratas terræ de terris eschætis quas idem Rex et Regina ei dederunt, et servitium militare quod ei dederunt, sicut habet inde cartas illorum. Et do ei totam terram [quæ fuit⁵] Eudonis Dapiferi in Normanniâ et Dapiferatum ipsius. Et hæc reddo ei ut rectum suum, ut habeat et teneat hæreditabiliter, ita ne ponatur inde in placitum versus aliquem. Et si dominus meus Comes Andegaviæ et ego voluerimus, Comes Gaufredus accipiet, pro dominiis et terris quos habet eschætis, et pro servitio militari quod habet, totam terram quæ fuit Eudonis Dapiferi in Angliâ, sicut tenuit eâ die quâ fuit vivus⁷ et mortuus, quia hoc est rectum suum. Præter illas c. libratas terræ quas ego dedi ei, et præter servitium xx. militum, quod ei dedi, et præter terram Ernulfi de Mannavill, sicut eam tenet de Comite Gaufredo, ex servitio x. militum. Et si potero perquirere erga episcopum Lundoniæ et erga ecclesiam sancti Pauli Castellum de Stortoford per escambium ad gratum suum, tunc do et concedo illud, ei et hæridibus suis, in feodo et hæriditate tenendum de me et hæridibus meis. Quod si facere non potero, tunc ei convenciono quod faciam illud prosternere et ex toto cadere. Et concedo quod Ernulfus de Mannavill teneat illas c. libratas terræ quas ei dedi, et Servitium x. militum de Comite Gaufredo patre suo. Et præter hoc, do et concedo eidem Ernulfo c. libratas terræ de terris eschætis, et servitium x. militum ad tenendum de domino meo Comite Andegaviæ et de me in capite, hæreditariè sibi et hæredibus suis, de nobis et de hæredibus nostris, videlicet Cristeshalam, et Benedis, pro quanto valent. Et superplus perficiam ei per considerationem Comitis Gaufredi. Et convenciono eidem Gaufredo Comiti Essex, quod dominus meus Comes Andegavia vel ego vel filii nostri nullam pacem aut concordiam cum Burgensibus Lundoniæ faciemus, nisi consessu⁸ et assensu prædicti Comitis

² The words within the brackets omitted. D.

³ Comitatus for vicecomitatibus. D.

⁴ Concedo *quod* habeat. D.

⁵ Quæ fuit, omitted. D.

⁶ Per servitium militare. D.

⁷ Et vivus. C.

⁸ Concensu. D.

Gaufredi, quia inimici ejus sunt mortales. Concedo etiam eidem Gaufredo quod novum Castellum quod firmavit super Wiam stet et remaneat ad efforciandum ad voluntatem suam. Concedo etiam ei, quod firmet unum Castellum ubicunque voluerit, in terrâ suâ, sicut ei per aliam cartam meam concessi, et quod stet et remaneat. Concedo etiam eidem Gaufredo quod ipse et omnes homines sui habeant et lucrentur omnia essarta sua, libera et quieta de omnibus placitis, facta usque ad diem quâ servicio domini mei Comitis Andegaviæ ac meo adhæsit. Hæc autem omnia supradicta tenementa in omnibus rebus concedo ei tenenda hæreditaire, sibi et hæredibus suis de me et de hæredibus meis. Quare volo et firmiter præcipio quod ipse Gaufredus comes et hæredes sui teneant hæc omnia supradicta tenementa, ita benè et in pace, et liberè et quietè, et honorificè, et plenariè sicut unquam aliquis Comitum meorum totius Angliæ melius vel liberius tenuit vel tenet. Et præter hoc dedi Willielmo filio Otuel. fratri ejusdem Comitis Gaufredi c. libratas terræ de terris escaetis tenendas⁹, de me et de hæredibus meis, in feudo et hæreditate pro servicio suo, et pro amore fratris sui Comitis Gaufredi. Concedo etiam quod Willielmus de Sai habeat omnes terras et tenementa quæ fuerunt patris sui, et ipse et hæredes sui; et quod Willielmus Capellanus habeat terram patris sui sine placito, et ipse et hæredes sui. Concedo etiam eidem Comiti Gaufredo, quod Willielmus filius Walteri et hæredes sui habeant custodiam Castelli de Windeshore et omnia sua tenementa, sicut ipse Willielmus et antecessores sui eam habuerunt de Rege H. patre meo, et antecessoribus ipsius. Et quod Matheus de Rumilli habeat terram patris sui, quam Gaufredus de Tureville tenet. Et Willielmus de Anco habeat Lavendonam sicut rectum suum hæreditariè. Concedo etiam eidem Comiti Gaufredo quod omnes homines sui teneant terras et tenementa sua de quocunque teneant, sine placito et sine pecuniæ donatione, et ut rectum eis teneatur de eorum calumpniis, sine pecuniæ donatione. Et quod Osbertus Octod. habeat illas xx. libratas terræ quas ei dedi et confirmavi per cartam meam. Hanc autem convencionem et donationem tenendam, affidavi manu meâ propriâ, in manu ipsius Comitis Gaufredi. Et hujus fiduciæ sunt obsides per fidem et testes Robertus Comes Gloucestriæ, et Milo Comes Herefordiæ, et Brianus filius Comitis, et Robertus filius Reginaldi, et Robertus de Curei Dapifer, et Johannes filius Gisleberti, et Milo de Bellocampo, et Radulphus Paganell, et Robertus de Oilli Constabularius et Robertus filius Heldebr̃. Et convencionavi eidem Comiti Gaufredo pro posse meâ, quod Comes Andegaviæ dominus meus assecurabit ei manu suâ propriâ, illud idem tenendum, et Henricus filius meus similiter. Et quod rex Franciæ erit inde

⁹ Tenendis. C.

obses si facere potero. Et si non potero, faciam quod ipse Rex capiet in manu illud tenendum. Et de hoc debent esse obsides per fidem: Juhel de Meduana, et Robertus de Sabloill, et Wido de Sabloill, et Paganus de Clarevalle, et Ganfredus de Clarevalle, et Andreas de Alviã et Pipinus de Turoñ. et Absalon Rumard, et Reginaldus comes Cornubiæ et Baldvinus comes Devonix, et Gislebertus comes de Penbrochiã, et Comes Hugo de Norfolciã, et Comes Albericus, et Henricus de Essex, et Petrus de Valoniis, et alli Barones mei, quos habere voluerit, et ego habere potero, erunt inde obsides similiter. Et quod Christianitas Angliæ quæ est in potestate meâ, capiet in manu istam supradictam conventionem tenendam eidem Comiti Gaufrido et hæredibus suis de me et de hæredibus meis. Apud Oxineford.

Sub magno sigillo dictæ Matildis Imperatricis.

NUMBER V.—*See page 382.*

Excellentissimo domino et karissimo fratri suo Henrico, dei gratiâ Regi Angliæ et domino Hiberniæ, duci Normanniæ, comiti Andegaviæ et Aquitaniæ, I. sua soror salutem, et si quid est dulciùs salute. Noverit dilectio vestra me esse sanam et incolumen, sic velle scire et audire de vobis et R(icardo) fratre meo. Prætereà vos attentius exoro quatinus dictis infidelium fidem perfectam contrà dominum H. de Lizignan non adhibeatis sed dictis domini Willelmi de Batill et R. de Barnevillâ indubitanter credatis et quàm ciciùs poteritis de statu vestro et voluntate me certam, si vobis placet, reddatis.—*From Royal Letters, Tower Collection, No. 65.*

NUMBER VI.—*See page 384.*

Viro venerabili et discreto, H. de Burgo, regni Angliæ iusticiario, Frater G. Broch, domorum militiæ Templi in Aquitaniâ Preceptor humilis, salutem in Domino. Significamus vobis quod, antequàm nuncii domini regis ad partes Pictaviæ accessissent, cum domino comite Marchiæ loquituri,—eminente guerræ periculo in terrâ Pictaviæ, omnes episcopi et barones quàmplurimi et alii probi homines de villis domini regis, utpote de Burdegaliâ de Niortu et Rochellâ et de Sancto Johanne Angliacensi, cum [domino] Hugone de Lezignan apud Engolismum convenerunt, eundem comitem convenientes ut antequàm eis guerram moveret ab altercationibus inter dominum regem et dominum comitem habitis, prefatum regem suosque consiliarios conveniret. Ipsi vero pre[dicti nuncios] de unâquâque villâ predictâ ad vos cum suis litteris transmittere decreverunt, hinc et indè nobis humiliter supplicantes ut nos cum eis ad vos accedamus. Nos vero, paci et tranquillitati terræ et hominum domini regis pro

viribus intendentes, illuc, Deo dante, cum eis nos promissimus accessuros. Inde est quod vestræ discretioni significamus quod nuncii supradicti unà nobiscum, Deo permittente, infra octabas instantis festi beati Michaelis, Londini adventabunt. Et vos consilium domini regis taliter festinare curetis ut loco et termino prædictis nunciis obviando a comite Marchiæ et ab aliis, hinc inde proposita audienda accedat. Scientes etenim quod ibi audire poteritis per quod inter dominum regem et dominum comitem bona pax et longa poterit reformari. Nos vero facti seriem vobis plenius curabimus enarrare; scientes pro certo quod, si nostrum bene concordaverit colloquium, damisellam Johannem, sororem domini regis, quietam et liberam vobis reddent, eam etenim vobis tradidissent si manû capere vellemus, quia rex faceret comiti quod deberet.—*From Royal Letters, Tower Collection, No. 946.*

This letter is torn and partially obliterated; a few blanks in the transcription have been filled up by words within parentheses, where the meaning is obvious.

NUMBER VII.—*See page 392.*

Henrico, Dei gratiâ, illustri regi Angliæ, domino Hybernæ, duci Normanniæ et Aquitaniæ comiti Andegaviæ, venerabili domino et karissimo fratri suo, I. eâdem gratiâ regina Scotiæ salutem et felices ad vota successus. Litteras quas nobis destinavit vestra excellentia cum magno gaudio suscepimus, sicut decuit, apud Scon die Mercurii ante annunciationem beatæ Mariæ. Auditis tamen litteris illis, tristiores fuimus effectæ per rumores quos nobis significastis in ipsis super molestiam quam Hugo de Laschi vobis et fidelibus vestris de Hybernâ intulit. Sed mediante gratiâ divinâ in brevi carebit effectum guerra per consilium et auxilium fidelium vestrorum. Ad hæc autem sciatis quod dominus rex Scotiæ nobis dixit quod in recessu presentium latoris non parte aliquem armatum equitem vel peditem de terrâ suâ velle proficisci in Hiberniâ in dampnum vel gravamen vobis vel vestris. Et si hoc posset de aliquo de terrâ suâ vel alienâ et inde posset intercepti, debita de ipso caperetur vindicta. In partibus quidem vestris secretius contravenimus esse. Verum quod rex Norwegiæ in hac estate proximo futurâ veniet in Hybernâ ad auxilium dicto Hugoni præstandum Hoc autem vobis significamus ut inde litteras. Valete.—*From Royal Letters, Tower Collection, No. 850.*

END OF VOL. I.

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"Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear."—1 PET. iii. 15.

THE recent republication of the Diary of the celebrated John Evelyn having directed attention to the manuscripts in the library at Wotton, the fruit of Evelyn's literary labours in a new and most important department is now for the first time brought to light. The work, which is entitled "A Rational Account of the True Religion," includes a condensed statement and investigation of its natural and Scriptural evidences. Suggested by the revolutionary changes, amid which he had passed his youth, and by the startling manifestations of infidelity that surrounded him in his more mature age, Evelyn, it appears, had undertaken this work to resolve in his own mind such occasional doubts as he might at any time have been moved to entertain; to satisfy himself on the various questions of religion; and to determine, once for all, what course to hold for the future. Considering the high literary reputation of the author, the extent and variety of his reading, the active benevolence of his character, and his well-known piety, the appearance of such a work at the present time is most opportune.

* * * For the Opinions of the Press on this work see the following pages.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS ON

Scarcely could a moment have been chosen, more seasonable than the present, for the publication of this posthumous work of the Christian Philosopher of Wotton, whose personal character, coupled with his erudition and depth of thought, gives more than ordinary weight to anything written by him upon the all-important subject of religion. To hear, in the midst of the din and debate of modern controversy, a voice from the grave pronouncing upon the questions so much agitated in the present day, will be a surprise to all, and to many, we doubt not, a source of much comfort. The composition of the present work originated in the desire felt by the learned and pious author to satisfy his own mind concerning the foundations of his faith, at a period which must have proved one of intense trial and distress to every earnest mind. Evelyn took in hand to review the whole subject of religion, tracing it to its fountain-head, and scrutinising at every step the evidence on which it rests. In the former part of the work he enters deeply into the metaphysical questions connected with the being of a God and the immortality of the soul, indulging, by the way, in various speculations on the nature of angels and the order of the celestial hierarchy. He then takes a view of the different systems of the pagan world, its idolatries and its philosophy, and thence passes on to the history of revelation, discussing the evidences of the authenticity and inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, the sense of which, according to the interpretation sanctioned by universal tradition (ascertained by the test of Vircentius Livinensis), he acknowledges as the rule and standard of faith.

Having thus laid the foundation for revealed religion, the author considers in detail its different stages, the patriarchal, the Jewish, the Christian; and the decadence and corruption of the latter through the different sects and heresies which have sprung up in successive ages. Among these, on arriving at the sixteenth century, he reckons, without hesitation, the Council of Trent, Martin Luther, and John Calvin, along with the Presbyterians, Brownists, Independents, Anabaptists, Quakers, and Fifth-Monarchy men, as well as Socinians; but dwells with special emphasis and circumstantiality upon the corruptions of Popery. Lastly, he defines the Church Catholic, and concludes that "the Church of England, reformed from the corruption of the Romish Church, and restored to primitive purity, agrees and is in community with the true and ancient Catholic faith, wherever professed at this day."

While the views and principles advocated in these volumes are of a strict and decisive Church character, the tone of moderation, in which the cause of the Church is pleaded, and the systems of her opponents are criticised, is calculated to induce a fair and dispassionate examination of the points at issue; and the work is, therefore, one likely to contribute in no small degree, especially at the present day, to the healing of existing differences, and to the vindication of the principles of our Church, alike against Romish superstition and against latitudinarian unbelief.—*John Bull*.

We are disposed to rate most highly the value of this learned, pious, and most able treatise. In it, Evelyn anticipates all the arguments of Butler, Warburton, Waterland, Paley, and Magee. As an epitome of all the later arguments against the infidelity of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the History of Religion is, indeed, invaluable.—*Standard*.

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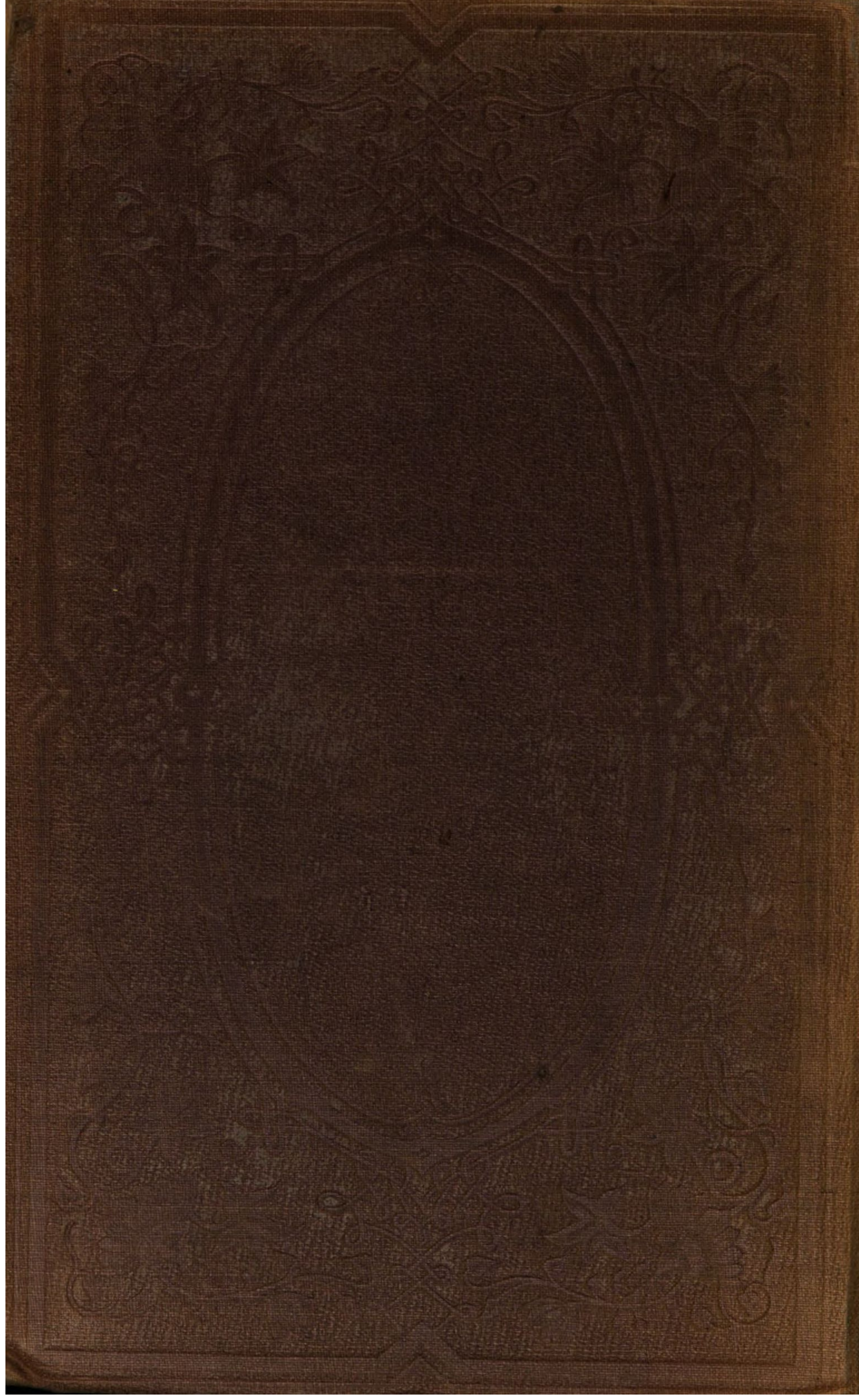














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